

THE HERON HERALD



Wednesday, May 27, 2020 | Issue 2, Vol. 6 | Northcoast Preparatory and Performing Arts Academy

NPA alumna helps protect environment

By Abram Rau
Staff Writer

From working at Blondie's Food and Drink in Arcata, to volunteering at the Sierra Club, to working in the Oregon State Senate, NPA class of 2009 alumna Morgan Gratz-Weiser has been busy throughout the last decade. For the past few years, Gratz-Weiser has been championing environmental causes at the highest levels in Oregon, and in 2019 was named among the 30 most influential lobbyists in Oregon by



PHOTO COURTESY OF MORGAN GRATZ-WEISER

Morgan Gratz-Weiser graduated from NPA in 2009, and now works as the Legislative Director at the Oregon Environmental Council. She has worked in the Oregon State Senate, as well as various environmental nonprofits in Oregon.

the Portland Business Journal.

Gratz-Weiser graduated from NPA in 2009, capping two years spent studying the IB Diploma Programme. In 2009, however, NPA looked rather different than it does today, as the high school occupied the Masonic Lodge and the Annex on Bayside Road in Arcata. Today,

SEE ALUMNA PAGE 2



A hard transition

NPA's transition to online schooling

NPA's own Heron Herald staff spells out "COVID-19" during a journalism class Zoom call. Zoom calls like this one have played a large role in NPA's transition to online learning and helped to maintain a sense of community during these uncertain times.

By Devon Baker-Berry
Staff Writer

"It's been challenging, it's been frustrating, and it's not what we have been trained and taught

to do," said Sara Hammoutene, NPA's french and chemistry teacher explaining the process of NPA's transition onto an online platform. Since NPA's shutdown, starting on March 16th, teachers and students

have been working through the difficulties of communicating via an online platform.

Connectivity issues, such as problems with individual computers or the internet have plagued

the entire transition. Combined with the somewhat alien nature of online schooling, this has made it hard for many students to maintain the same level of interest in school.

SEE TRANSITION PAGE 4

We're all in this together

Essential workers share their experiences during the global pandemic

By Zoe Osborn
Staff Writer

As the number of COVID-19 cases continues to climb in rural areas like Humboldt County, so does concern, uncertainty, and fear among its residents. However, healthcare workers who are committed to keeping the community safe are providing

hope in this time of unpredictability.

With, as of press time, 93 confirmed cases (66 of which are recovered) and two deaths, Humboldt County is flattening the curve more quickly than many other places in the world. While Humboldt's low population density plays a role in these small numbers,

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PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSANNA GIBSON

Registered Nurse Susanna Gibson is seen here wearing her mask, one of many safety precautions taken at Saint Joseph's Plastic Surgery Clinic. She and many other healthcare workers are keeping patients and staff safe during this COVID-19 outbreak.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GALE MCCOMAS
Seniors Sasha Woodruff (left) and Siena Costanzo (right) sing carols at Eureka's Timber Ridge assisted living facility during the winter celebration, which they've been a part of since their freshman years.

Finding solidarity through the lense of tradition

By Omega Gaskill
Staff Writer

Connection has always been an essential aspect of human life, but is especially important in times of adversity such as what the world is being faced with today due to the COVID-19 pandemic. People across the globe are striving to remain interconnected by reflecting on their shared experiences and

traditions, and NPA's community is no different.

What many at NPA find so unique and captivating about the school is the sense of community that the students and faculty share. While the core values of those at NPA are often similar in that people prioritize respect above all else, something that continues to strengthen the bond between students, their families, and the school is the deep-rooted nature of its tra-

ditions. Since being founded in the early 2000's, practices such as the cotillion ball, bi-annual literature seminars, spring semester plays, and the May Day celebration have served as a way to connect students past and present, and give alumnus a way to remain linked to the school they once attended, no matter how long its been since their graduation.

SEE TRADITION PAGE 3

A reflection on Bogotá

By Alex Riggs
Staff Writer

On my first weekend in Bogotá, my host family surprised me with a visit to the nearby amusement park with all of my friends. We rode the park's roller coasters and rides until dark. Besides being a way to bond with my new friends, I got to admire the city's scenery from atop the ferris wheel. As one of my first

experiences in the country, this is a very fond memory from the three months I spent in Colombia before coming home due to COVID-19.

Traditions and culture were what struck me the most during my time in Bogota. Formal events such as my younger host sister's quinceanera or the many surprise birthday parties were events which filled my calendar

SEE BOGOTA PAGE 4



PHOTO BY ALEX RIGGS

NPA Sophomore Alex Riggs and her host sister Isabella Soler Roldan await the schoolbus at six a.m. as the sun rises in Bogotá, Colombia.

SPORTS Girls Basketball Team

As they continue to learn on and off the court together, NPA's girls basketball team celebrates their triumphs. With new coaches and players it made for an exciting season. See page 5



TRAVEL India trips

The long and interconnected history of NPA's India trips. From the formation of the sister school to the most recent trip this last December. The connection that is shared between two schools, and therefore the connection of two different countries. See page 9



DEMONSTRATION Earth Day

NPA Climate Act Club organizes Zoom Earth Day demonstration that spans over continents, creating a sense of community and understanding between all of those involved. See page 12



The Word

How has Covid-19 been changing your lifestyle on a daily basis?



Sasha Woodruff

Being home has reminded me of when I was homeschooled, so it isn't that hard. It hasn't necessarily helped me, but it has made my sleep schedule shift later. Covid-19 has made my family try and hangout more, however we still spend a majority in our own worlds.



Lily Hodges

With the shelter in place order I have had a lot more time for my creative pursuits, but I have been exercising a lot less. I have been connecting with family by way of whole family zoom calls. I am enjoying spending my time at home, but I have been struggling to motivate myself to keep up with schoolwork, and I miss my friends.



Michael Scott

I have been leaving the house much less often and noticed that I tend to be a bit more lethargic and just lie around a lot more. I also find myself missing small parts about hanging out with friends or walking around town, things you wouldn't notice until you're no longer exposed to it.



Eva Pearlingi

These past few months, I have had more time to do things like reading, journaling, and making art, that before were always pushed to the end of my to-do list, or I found excuses not to do it at all. Not being able to see friends is something that I definitely miss, but I still keep in contact with some people, and have recently been writing letters to family and friends so our communication is not just digital. Since staying in one place for so long I have started to see the small changes that I hadn't noticed before, like a new flower that has started to bloom, or how the color of the sky today is different from yesterday.

ALUMNA

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the Annex houses NPA's middle school, established in 2015, and the Masonic Lodge is no longer in use by the school. Gratz-Weiser reminisced about her years spent at NPA, and how its traditions like the May Day celebration and the cotillion ball were a staple of her time at NPA, just as they are for today's students.

In high school, Gratz-Weiser was a driven student. Her senior year of IB coursework demanded a full schedule, which left her time to apply to only three universities, one of which was Willamette University in Oregon. She was accepted as an Environmental Science major, and completed her Bachelor's degree there.

As Gratz-Weiser was finishing her degree, most of her time became occupied with writing her senior thesis. Much like in high school, she was solely focused on her academic pursuits as a senior, and despite being a passionate student, hadn't looked into the Environmental Policy jobs she was interested in, leaving her with no solid summer plans after graduation.

She decided to move back to Arcata for the summer after graduation, and took a job working at Blondie's Food and Drink, which is owned by her sister-in-law. For her, the move was necessary because "[she] needed to try something new," and it was a good way to experience being part of the workforce in a place she was familiar with.

As the summer of 2013 came to an end, a friend living in Portland offered Gratz-Weiser their apartment lease while they would be teaching abroad in Japan. At this point, Gratz-Weiser hadn't had any full-time job experience in environmental policy-making, but was able to find some footing after moving to Portland by volunteering with a local Sierra Club chapter, one of the oldest environmental organizations in the United States. This opportunity was a great foray into environmental activism, and she maintained a strong work ethic throughout the time she was volunteer-

ing.

She quickly established herself as a reliable volunteer with the Sierra Club, working on fundraising mail campaigns and data entry for various research projects. The help Gratz-Weiser brought while she volunteered was noticed by the Sierra Club employees she was working with, and she soon built a strong rapport with them.

After some time volunteering for the Sierra Club, a paid seasonal position became available, and the Sierra Club employees she had been volunteering with encouraged her to apply. The job was with the national Sierra Club branch as an Organizer with the Responsible Trade campaign. During her time in this position, she worked to organize volunteers to join rallies, and specifically, to rally Oregonian members of Congress to vote against the Trans-Pacific Partnership due to a lack of environmental and labor protections in the legislation.

This seasonal organizing position would only last so long. Gratz-Weiser decided to plan ahead, and began to search for another job as soon as possible. Jobs in environmental policy were competitive, she discovered, after being rejected from the first few she applied to. She learned that the jobs she wanted tended to go to applicants with Graduate degrees, so she decided to enroll in the Lewis and Clark Law School's Master of Environmental Law program.

Master of Law programs are designed for students to learn about the law by taking law classes, but not pass a bar exam to become a lawyer. This one-year program gave Gratz-Weiser access to virtually all of the classes taught at the Lewis and Clark Law School, where she learned alongside students in the J.D. program.

After graduating from Lewis and Clark with her Master of Studies in Environmental Law, her job hunt resumed. With a graduate degree, she was able to compete for the types of environmental policy jobs she was beaten for before, and for about three months, she worked for a regional watershed advocacy group in Oregon, but quickly moved on when a friend rec-

ommended a position to her with an Oregon State Senator.

Gratz-Weiser was hired as a Legislative Assistant for Senator Richard Devlin, a Democrat who represented Oregon's 19th legislative district. In legislative offices like the one Gratz-Weiser worked in, there are two staffs: a support staff that works for a congressperson year-round, and a staff that supports them during the legislative session. Gratz-Weiser was initially hired onto the year-round staff as a Legislative Assistant, a title she held until Senator Devlin hired a second staffer, which advanced Gratz-Weiser into the role of Devlin's Chief of Staff.

In 2017, Senator Devlin announced that he would be retiring from the Oregon Senate at the end of the year. In Oregon, Democrats control the Senate, and consequently are in charge of most of its agenda. The Senate Majority Office is responsible for guiding the chamber's agenda, and is in charge of many Oregon Democratic party initiatives. Gratz-Weiser knew the team in the SMO from her work with Senator Devlin, so when a job as a Policy Advisor became available in 2017, she applied for and got the job.

Through working as a member of Senator Devlin's staff and then for the Senate Majority Office, Gratz-Weiser's job was mainly focused on budget issues, which required her to cover issues such as education, healthcare, human services, workforce and labor policy, as well as environmental policy. As the months passed, she felt that she wanted to gear her effort towards environmental policy, instead of the variety of issues she juggled working as a legislative staffer. Her commute was another point of frustration; at this point, Gratz-Weiser was still living in Portland, and had to endure the hour-long commute each way from Portland to Salem in order to get to work.

Gratz-Weiser left her job in the Senate Majority office in 2018 to work for the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC), which was founded in 1968 as an environmental advocacy group working to advance healthy and sustainable growth for the state. Currently, Gratz-Weiser is the

OEC's Legislative Director, meaning that she oversees the council's involvement in Oregonian politics. With her experience working in the State Legislature, she is able to give OEC a strong voice in Oregonian politics.

In January 2019, the Portland Business Journal named Gratz-Weiser as one of the 30 most influential lobbyists in Oregon. The Journal ranked the lobbyists according to financial expenditures associated with them either as individuals, or by the organization they were associated with. On the ranking, Gratz-Weiser gave comments explaining the OEC's role in lobbying. "OEC as a 501(c)(3) non-profit does not contribute to candidates. My name is on there because OEC is the organization lead on our coalition (Renew Oregon) and did the campaign expenditure reporting for our coalition's climate lobbying efforts" said Gratz-Weiser.

She explained that "being listed there shows that climate and environmental work takes collaborative and dedicated lobbying efforts to build relationships with legislators and advance policy priorities." Renew Oregon, the coalition the OEC heads, is a partnership of many groups of Oregonians who work to move Oregon's economy away from polluting energy and towards a cleaner economy. Officially, OEC is a member of Renew Oregon's Steering Council, a council of organizations which guide the coalition's various renewable-energy related efforts.

For NPA students thinking about their own careers, Gratz-Weiser has some advice. She says that the ability to network is one of the most effective ways to advance a career. Almost all of the job offers she's come across were the result of knowing someone who referred her to that job. For networking itself, she urges people not to be afraid of reaching out, for something as small as asking someone to get a cup of coffee with you could make a difference that impacts the trajectory of your entire career. Most often people will be willing to listen, at least for a few moments, to what you have to say.

Bazemore's adaptation of Hamlet gives audience twice the thrill

By Nikita Van Nordstrand
Staff Writer

Recently, NPA's Junior and Senior classes collaborated on a production of *The Hamlet Question*, directed by Dr. Jean Heard Bazemore. The production starred seniors Aiden Vergen and Julian Ramirez, both as Hamlet. The students spent two weeks creating the production at HSU's Gist Hall and at the NPA campus, before opening the show on January 1st.

Ramirez explained that having two Hamlets was a creative

choice made by Bazemore, who felt that Hamlet, being such a multifaceted character, would best be represented by two people. Ramirez's take on the complicated character showcased Hamlet's flawed side, while Vergen's portrayal was more kind and thoughtful.

Vergen explained that his favorite aspect of the overall production was the community that made it possible, explaining that "the best and most rewarding parts of the play are plentiful and hard to narrow down, however between a productive collaboration between the actors,

musicians, technicians, and director, it resulted in valuable friendships and connections that lasted beyond the production." A way in which NPA's annual plays serve its students other than by providing them with a creative outlet is that the experience draws together different classes, and in Vergen's words, "the opportunity to work with fellow classmates to improve and learn about ourselves is valuable, and the time the cast spent together contributing to a common goal has always been my favorite aspect of a theatrical production."

Lily Hodges, the only sophomore in the production, played Queen Gertrude, Hamlet's mother. Hodges said that working with a cast of

upperclassmen and getting to know them had been a wonderful experience as well as a fun challenge. "It was difficult for me to separate myself from Gertrude, given the strength of the emotions she feels, or maybe it was the fact that I went by 'Gertrude' for two weeks as not everyone knew my name," she let on. Rather than simply playing a part due to academic obligation, Bazemore implores her students to step into their characters with as much gusto as possible, taking on their respective roles because they wish to do so. For Hodges, it was hard not to become enthralled by her character, and she found herself taking on the role wholeheartedly. "Gertrude consumed me for two weeks. [In] everything I did, she was right there with me. All of the emotions I felt, I felt with her passion and the depth of what she has been through," Hodges admitted, adding that "it was very difficult to separate myself from her when the play was over, and she will always be a part of me."

NPA has long been known for the dedication of those involved in its theatre program, and this year's production of *The Hamlet Question* was a testament to that legacy, owing not only to the enthusiasm of its director, but to the students who worked tirelessly to make it happen.



PHOTO BY JUAN-NIKOLAS ENGEL

Four members of the cast of *Hamlet* perform. This version was unique because Hamlet was played by not one but two actors, Aiden Vergen (far left) and Julian Ramirez (second left).



The social distancing chronicles

By Alex Riggs
Staff Writer

As COVID-19 has begun to spread through California specifically Humboldt County, NPA has implemented measures to further the public’s safety, by making school entirely virtual with the help of Zoom, a video call app and platform. This huge transition has been quite a shift for students, their families, and teachers on both a local and global scale. Finding entertainment and ways to socialize without leaving one’s home is a challenge but nonetheless a reality for 1.3 billion students worldwide.

From flower pressing to celebrating a birthday in quarantine, NPA students have been finding creative activities to replace the gnawing boredom of social distancing and online classes.

Junior Oliver Schroeder has been learning Gregg shorthand, a way to abbreviate language that doctors, secretaries, court reporters and others have used since the late 1880’s. However, Schroeder has been hitting roadblocks most days, saying that “it’s really difficult but will be worth it.” He appreciates having something to keep his mind working when “everything gets boring while [he’s] stuck at home.” For Schroeder, online schooling feels like “school in limbo, being that everyone is halfway between being at home and being at school.” He has found it challenging to keep up with his coursework due to the lack of in-person, direct resources from teachers.

Besides homework, which

now arguably accounts for all of the work students are tasked with, sophomore Rose Soto has been doing a lot of watercolor painting. Having taken a watercolor class previous to social distancing becoming mandatory, she is well-equipped to paint for the time to come. In addition, Soto occupies her time playing video games, and “spending a lot of time outside with [her] dogs to maintain [her] mental health.”

Former NPA student Marlen McComas has been “going on lots of walks with the dogs and [her] mom,” as well as watching an excessive amount of Disney movies and baking for her family.

McComas’ older sister, NPA senior Gale McComas, has been taking time to focus on the things she didn’t seem to have time for when school was proceeding as usual, including reading, gardening, and trying out new recipes. McComas has also been preparing for college by beginning to pack and by spending time with her family before she has to leave. McComas thinks that “this is a time where many people are looking for guidance, and we’re seeing the true weakness of our president and his staff, but luckily we have lots of experts who have taken to the internet to inform us.” Balance in these uncertain times is key, and McComas urges people to “stay informed,” but not to “weigh yourself down with incessant news and updates.”

McComas is grateful that she’s in a safe and stable environment at home, and she

encourages supporting those in more difficult situations if you have the ability to do so, since “now is the time to stand up for those who are struggling and help the community.” McComas suggests going grocery shopping for your grandparents or older neighbors, making masks for healthcare workers and those in need, and donating food to organizations like Food for People if it is within reason for you to do so.

Senior Shoni Rheinschmidt has also been trying new things, and has been making sure that she goes outside every day, in an effort to make light of this immense adjustment. During this time, Rheinschmidt has been “pressing flowers and painting to pass the time.” She advised students struggling with online school to use this newfound free time wisely, noting that “it is very hard to stay motivated during this time, but starting new things is always the hardest part.”

What all of these students have in common is the substantial shift they are experiencing in relation to their new school schedules. Before this period, Soto may not have been painting as much, and Rheinschmidt didn’t have the same amount of time and freedom to try so many new things. The mundaneness of living inside with little to no social contact has made students from NPA and other schools around the world learn new skills, and above all else, exercise lots of patience. Though self-isolation can be monotonous, bland, and repetitive, there’s always something new to explore, as well as there being much more time to revisit the old.

TRADITION

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Constituting a fundamental aspect of NPA’s central tenets, the theatre arts have long been recognized for their ability to draw students together in an engaging way. “Using drama in the classroom was sort of a pedagogical thing that was part of the culture at NPA,” explained IB history teacher Andrew Freeman, who began working at NPA in 2005. In the past, teachers heavily implemented drama into a number of classes, from history and English to evidently lively theatre arts classes. Since NPA’s earlier days, much of the fervor surrounding the use of drama in an academic sense has died down, doubtlessly owing to the steadily growing student body and subsequently increasing student to staff ratio. While skits and improvisational work now tend to be limited to theatre and related elective classes, the weekly all-school meetings still incorporate aspects of drama such as skits and spirited group discussions as a way to keep the tradition alive.

As one of NPA’s most well established traditions, and a widely recognized aspect of its academic curriculum, the literature seminars are a way for students to engage as a class in a more formal setting to discuss works of literature deemed to be of significance by their administrative faculty. These acclaimed books range from Huckleberry Finn, which students read for their first-ever literature seminar in the beginning of their freshman year, to Gulliver’s Travels, the second book read during junior year, to The Brothers K, the eighth and final installment of literature seminar novels. During any given seminar, students gather with their classmates at the Bazemore residence for an evening filled with an in-depth analytical discussion of the text while enjoying a meal often prepared by principal Dr. Jean Bazemore.

While holiday-specific events and traditions are not an overbearing focus at NPA, each season tends to receive recognition in some way, whether it be the Halloween house in the fall, the May Day extravaganza in the spring, or the last day of school celebration before winter break, the last of which Freeman has noted he has a great fondness for. “Over the years, the tradition of going to sing at the retirement homes on the last day of school before winter break has been my favorite, because every year it’s just easy to see how special it is,” he explained.

Although it was impossible for the May Day celebration to take place this year due to the county-wide shelter in place order, many students recollected fondly (from home) upon memories from years past. “May Day’s beautiful, and it’s an exciting moment when school gets stopped for something fun,” explained senior Mandy Smalley, remembering the colorful, cheery attitudes and outfits of prior senior classes as they led the student body in a vivacious race to see who could tie their maypole faster. “The May Day celebration was something I remember fondly from my first year,” recollected Freeman, who is sad to see it unavoidably lapse this year. Another tradition with a history of being heavily student-orchestrated is the Halloween house, the school’s oldest and longest standing recognized tradition, dating back nearly

a decade. The practice of decorating the Bazemore residence in Trinidad each year was started by a group of homeschoolers prior to NPA’s establishment as a charter school, and has since transitioned into a festive yearly field trip for students from schools including Trinidad Elementary and NPA’s own middle school.

For as long as they have existed, NPA students of all ages have looked forward to spring semester traditions in particular, as they all seem to have a familiar sense of joy about them, likely stemming from (no pun intended) the deep green foliage and colorful flowers that seem to appear around every corner. Both the last day of school picnic and the graduation ceremony are cheery and lighthearted, yet not without a heavily sentimental air. The picnic, which has taken place at Redwood Park for a number of years, serves as an all-school farewell and celebration of a successful academic year. Lunch is served, and after yearbooks have been distributed, students and their teachers take part in signing one another’s yearbooks before congregating at the Bazemore residence the following day for the annual senior class commencement ceremony. “I’m really sad that graduation isn’t going to happen, especially because NPA has such a unique graduation ceremony,” explained Smalley. “It’s at our founders house on a cliff overlooking the shore, and it just feels so special because NPA isn’t the largest school, so it’s more intimate.” As for this year’s graduation, NPA plans to produce a video presentation for each senior, taking measures to include familiar aspects of graduations past, such as individual senior recognitions, Artist’s Diploma and Seal of Bilitery acknowledgment, and senior speeches.

While being less consistent (yet no less important) than the aforementioned traditions, NPA’s all-school meetings have provided a designated time and place for the student body to gather, brainstorming and exchanging ideas, while under the supervision of a host of teachers. This year, all school meetings took place on Tuesdays during the second period of the day, a standard that has been reinstated thanks to the streaming capabilities of Zoom, the platform on which NPA has been conducting lessons for the past several months. Although this is a small step in the direction of regularity, the effort has not gone unnoticed by students and faculty alike who wish to mimic their former routines to some extent.

Considering that the very future of the American education system as we know it hangs in the balance due to COVID-19 and self-isolation, it can be valuable to reflect upon the things many had previously taken for granted, whether they be the simple act of attending school, or a much anticipated annual celebration. “It is what it is,” remarked senior Julian Ramirez as he pondered his own experience with self isolation. “I don’t like it or hate it, it’s just something that has to be done and is necessary, like homework.” While the graduating class of 2020 will miss out on what could be pivotal memory-making moments, NPA’s staff and faculty remain hard at work deliberating over ways for them to remain connected and present during their final months of high school. For, in the wise words of Amy Miller, “traditions are what hold communities together.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF LILY HODGES
Sophomore Lily Hodges dons a homemade mask as she cuddles her family’s newly adopted puppy named Teddy.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTUMN WRIGHT
Left to right: Autumn Wright, Jason Roberts, Omega Gaskill, Abram Rau, and Garret Leach on the deck of the Wharfinger Building in Old Town, Eureka at last year’s cotillion.

A unique adaptation of a classic tale

NPA’s Freshman and Sophomore Classes Bring the World of Beauty and the Beast to Life

By Ari Alter
Staff Writer

A whimsical production performed by NPA’s Freshman and Sophomore classes, Beauty and the Beast was an original script written by NPA senior Sasha Woodruff and directed by Morgan March. This 90 minute play put students to the test, as they were given only two weeks to create an entire production, which they



PHOTO BY ARI ALTER
Freshman and sophomore students run lines for a scene in Beauty and the Beast at the Gist Hall Theatre at HSU under the direction of Morgan March.

achieved cohesively. By using a completely original script and an adaptable directing style, Beauty and the Beast was a success in the eyes of those involved with the

production.

March has directed NPA plays in the past, including the 2018 Sophomore class adaptation of Peer Gynt, but was new to

the concept of directing a student-written play, which he felt resulted in a “more collaborative,” although challenging experience. By using his “empathetic and fluid,” style of directing, March guided students in coming together cohesively as a cast. His focus was centered “on the staging and not the individual actors,” and resulted in the creation of a play that flowed effortlessly between scenes. The straightforward and simple set helped to offset the actors, who stood out on stage. Freshman Isa Lucas-Zerbe described this play as “a really unique experience,” where she “learned a lot.”

Overall, NPA’s production of Beauty and the Beast was a “very creative take on a hybrid of fantasies,” according to junior Ailani Hanshaw. It was a refreshing adaptation of an original fairytale, featuring unique costumes and a simplistic set, which audiences received well each night that the performance ran.



BOGOTA

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from week to week. Amidst these colorful events and traditions lies a core component: music. Popular music genres included reggaeton, a genre of hip hop dominated by Latin beats with Colombian artists layered over it, which was very popular among teens. Reggaeton favorites often included J Balvin, Maluma, and ChocQuibTown, who are all Colombian artists. Also common was traditional Colombian music, such as salsa, merengue, and bachata, which were enjoyed nostalgically, and when dancing. During my time in Bogotá, I appreciated the liveliness and non-judgemental attitude taken by those I met in teaching me these key traditions of the Colombian culture, and I eventually learned bachata in order to dance at parties. Memories of my host sister's 15th birthday party and many other get-togethers amongst my friends bring back so much warmth.

One contrast that I came across was the difference in greeting customs between America and Colombia. In Arcata, I'm accustomed to a nod in my direction to acknowledge my presence when walking through town, while Bogotá-style greetings include a kiss on the cheek, a hug, or a handshake at every hello and goodbye. Every morning when I arrived at school and every afternoon when I left, I'd greet all of my friends this way, and though it took some adjusting to, it seemed to create a closer and more interpersonal bond between my classmates and myself. I also felt a very strong amiability from the words family would call me, such as "mi vida," "mamita," or "amor," words of endearment similar to "honey," or "sweetheart," as they made me feel more connected to my family and their culture. That said, it was far from easy to adjust to such a drastically different lifestyle. It's



PHOTO BY ALEX RIGGS

The marketplace in Miraflores, Riggs' host mother's hometown, bustles on a Sunday morning as Colombians rush to purchase their produce for the week.

difficult to say when culture shock really began to wear off, but it took weeks. Something important to remember is that cultural adjustment is measured in minute victories and in the immense amount of work it takes to understand a language and its subtleties and slang, rather than in the quantity of days I spent living there.

One huge adjustment for me was moving in with a fully Spanish-speaking Colombian family, and I found myself virtually alone in a new country. My host family included my younger sister Isabella Soler Roldan, my older sister Nana Baez, my mom Natalia Yuri Roldan, and myself, as well as Tato, our dog, and Bigotes, our cat. My host sisters spoke some english, but my host mom didn't speak any, so after about a week of living there, we transitioned away from english completely. Though difficult at first, my spanish improved incredibly quickly, and I felt a huge amount of respect for my host mother, Nath, being a single mom with (counting myself) three daughters and a full-time job.

Although only the four of us lived in the house, our family didn't end there. We

made a visit to Miraflores, which is about five hours by car, to see Nath's family. I met my host grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles. Miraflores is a tiny town of 10,000 people where Nath grew up, and is very rural and incredibly close-knit. In one day, I knew my way around the entirety of the hilly river town. Of course, we paid a visit to the nearby river, which included a waterfall, natural jacuzzis, and incredible greenery. Amongst the things I learned during my time in Colombia was that every part of the country has different coffee and arepas, both staples in Colombian culture. For example, the coffee in Miraflores was sweeter than that of Bogotá, and the arepas were thicker and doughier. Though these seem like minute differences, added up they equal the difference between costeños (coastal people) and city folk.

I spent over a week in full confinement with my host family when COVID-19 hit Colombia, and what kept us sane was eating outside in our little flower garden in the front of our house. Living in a city, almost nobody had a yard, so I was incredibly grateful for ours. Because of this, I became all the more appreciative for the abun-

dance of space and nature in Humboldt when I came back.

Being vegetarian in a predominantly meat-eating country, I felt like quite the anomaly, particularly on my first day in Bogotá with my host family, seeing as they took me to a restaurant whose mascot happened to be a cow. I graciously accepted the recommendation of ajiaco, a staple Colombian chicken soup, and while it was very tasty it admittedly felt odd to be eating meat again.

I also had a number of mixups in restaurant settings, when the food I ordered would arrive with meat, despite having specified that I didn't eat it. This ranged from ordering pizza, food at parties, or even getting lunch at the school cafeteria. That being said, I understand that different cultures have different norms around meat-eating, and being a vegetarian in Colombia was an adjustment on all sides. No doubt it's difficult not eating meat in a place where everyone around me does, but adhering to my principles the best I could was paid off tremendously in both my conscience and in my diet.

Compared to the food I was used to, I have found Colombian food to be worlds different. Lunch in Bogotá (usually the largest meal) was often lentils, rice, and platano, or plantains, as they are known in the USA. Rice comes with just about every meal there, almost equivalent to bread for North Americans. Tropical fruit juices -like guanabana- and a side of arepas would replace orange juice with a bowl of cereal during breakfast.

Perhaps the most unusual of all was the food combinations I experienced during my stay, which included jam with eggs, jam with a quesadilla, chicken with chocolate, and my host grandfather's personal favorite, coffee with aromatic (sweet natural tea). Admittedly, jam on a quesadilla is something I did enjoy, although I could never explain why.

One of the biggest changes to my reality in Bogotá was the school I went to, Gimnasio Del Norte. Also an IB school, Gimmorte was a great fit for me. I walked to the bus at a startling 6 a.m. each morning, and rode for about an hour to the campus, which was full of flowers and brick classrooms with skylights for ceilings. Riding the bus every day

brought me even more opportunities to make friends, especially with the upper-classmen on my route. My school days felt notably long, though only an hour longer than NPA's schedule, likely because of the early wakeup. Another adjustment I made at Gimmorte was wearing a uniform every day, which ended up being a way to fit in more easily with my peers. My experience there was overwhelmingly positive, with supportive teachers, a beautiful campus, and very responsible management, including the school's head, Carlos Alberto, who I came to know personally. Gimmorte always prioritized learning and critical thinking above achieving a particular letter grade. Some of my favorite classes there included website design HTML coding, physics, and Spanish class, though I would sit cluelessly through a number of my classes because of the language barrier. I was also invited to choose a sport, and chose soccer to practice with my host sister and friends. I ended up being way in over my head in terms of skill level, but enjoyed myself nonetheless. The biggest difference I felt compared to NPA was the campus, which provided a certain community space and togetherness I hadn't had in the past. I also went on a field trip with my class to Rio Claro, a gorgeous natural reserve near Medellin, about eight hours by car from Bogotá. In Rio Claro, I grew closer to my peers, ziplined 80 feet over rivers, trekked through river-caves, hiked in the incredible heat, and ate lots of food local to the area. This was an incredible experience and gave me an awareness of Colombia's natural wonders and diversity.

From culture shock and warm greetings to bachata and exploring rural Colombia, my exchange taught me so much, and I returned a changed person.

TRANSITION

from page 1

"I have been having trouble keeping track of all of the work I have without the discipline of going to in-person classes every day," NPA sophomore Lily Hodges explained. The lack of a constant, rigorous schedule has not only affected students will's, but added a day to day anxiety into their life. "I'm constantly looking at the schedule to make sure I am not missing anything," said senior Shoni Rheinschmidt. However, it seems that everybody has been adapting quickly to these and other newfound changes in their environment. Micheal Masinter, one of NPA's English teachers, had been deeply worried about a lack of student involvement in his classes. However, now that his students have acclimated to their new norm, his fears proved

I am proud of what we have done. We are giving a structure to the students, something which is very important."

Sara Hammoutene, teacher

unfounded as he was "still getting a pretty good amount of participation and work from students."

Students aren't the only ones having trouble with Zoom, the platform NPA has transitioned its classes onto, for many teachers including Masinter and Hammoutene have had difficulty teaching as issues with internet connection continue to bedevil their classes. During the first few weeks of distance learning, before various workaround strategies were agreed upon, teachers would have to constantly repeat themselves as sound would cut out, or their screen would freeze, leading to confusion of their students.

Thankfully, for many people these issues have begun to resolve. "My new computer from the school should arrive soon," said Hammoutene, who had been forced to borrow a computer because her Chromebook didn't work with Zoom.

While zoom has its problems, it has been a great resource for schools around the world. Some members of the community have an affinity for the online platform, including NPA junior Miles Eldridge, who said that he "prefers online schooling". However, a consistent downside in most people's lives is the near total lack of face-to-face social interactions.

Hammoutene is hopeful, saying that while she does miss the in-person aspects of the school, she thinks that "it is possible to have successful classes on Zoom."

What might be even more surprising to many than the school shut down, is NPA's lightning-fast response to it. Just two days after closure, NPA had a running system on which to continue school, with active WhatsApp group chats helping teachers to problem-solve and support each other. More than lessons have been conveyed through Zoom, as NPA's spirit has continued to grow even during these trying times. For the NPA middle school, recess has been continued by way of a supervised Zoom meeting, allowing students to chat with their peers, and for high schoolers, members of the IB theatre class performed a quick production during the weekly all-school Zoom session. "I am proud of what we have done," said Hammoutene, concluding proudly that "we are giving a structure to the students, something which is very important."

To unionize or not

By Devon Baker-Berry
Staff Writer

Unions have been important organizations that have helped to change the atmosphere of many work environments for decades. However, even with the major effects of unions being felt around the world, from month-long strikes in France to local repercussions of teachers fighting pay cuts at Arcata High School, the vast majority of charter and private schools are not unionized. According to a study done by the non-profit National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, in 2016-2017 only 11.3% of charter schools were unionized, dropping from 12.3% in 2009-2010.

"I feel less safe and less secure because I can be fired at will at my current job. I don't have any avenue for voicing concerns," said Jennifer Berry, who teaches English at York, a non-unionized private school in Monterey, California. The lack of a union at her new workplace has made it difficult to organize and find ways to voice teacher's ideas to the administration. Berry is currently facing trouble in her current job, but without a union to support her and her co-workers, she has found that "everyone feels too vulnerable to

be the person who goes to talk with the head of school." This lack of confidence was a recurring theme along with a feeling of vulnerability and riskiness that was filling Berry's work life.

Unions not only allow teachers to tell the administration about their concerns, whether they be communicated directly to a union representative or represent increased job security allowing for greater intrepidity, but they also give teachers the power to do something about the issues they face. These unions provide teachers with the ability to come to an agreement through a collective bargaining contract, introducing a legally binding agreement between employers and employees. These contracts help teachers bargain for a multitude of things, ranging from pay to workload adjustments, or even vacation specifics. During Berry's time at a unionized school in the Bay Area, collective bargaining helped teachers control unreasonable amounts of work. "Our union helped us bargain for capping our English and history classes at 32 students because of the paper grading load," she explained. Not only this, but if the school had made decisions to accept

more students, Berry and her co worker's pay would have been adjusted to fit the new workload.

"I feel less safe and less secure because I can be fired at will at my current job. I don't have any avenue for voicing concerns."

Jennifer Berry, private school teacher

However, not all views on teacher unions are supportive. A major concern many critics have is the inability for public schools to fire teachers who are considered to be inadequately performing their job. The same system that supports teachers in collective bargaining and providing job security adds additional steps to firing problematic teachers. Berry admits that "there is some truth to that statement," as she faced these problems at her earlier job teaching at a unionized school where a teacher had used his power to sexually harass many of the female students in his classes. Even after a multitude of complaints were filed against the teacher, the union protected him, partly due to the length of time he had been working there. In general, Berry has found that "there are just as many incompetent teachers in

private schools as public schools."

With teachers like Berry stating that they "would prefer to be part of a union," and NPA's history teacher Andrew Freeman reminiscing on the need for a union in a previous job, many may be left wondering why all schools, and charter schools in particular, aren't unionized. The California Teachers Association (CTA), one of the largest teacher unions in the country, returns to the roots of charter schools to explain their lack of unions, explaining that when charter schools were originally founded as small, local schools, decisions were made closer to home, eliminating the need for unionization. In recent years however, many charter schools have become part of larger organizations and have had individual controls taken away from them as the network expands. "As a result," the CTA comments, "many teachers don't feel like they have a real voice in important policies that impact their students and their profession." Moving forward, the importance of teacher's unions will continue to adjust, owing in part to the global pandemic which is shifting education systems worldwide. While the future of unions is unknown, it can certainly be said that they have served those working under them in a positive and protective manner.



It’s not always about winning

NPA girls’ basketball team respects teammates and opponents alike

By Jaxon Peaker
Staff Writer

With a combination of team spirit and positive sportsmanship, the NPA’s girl’s basketball team ended their 2019 season having built a respectable name for themselves. Under the coaching of Paul Warner and assistant coach Marnie Lucas, the team persevered and created concrete team chemistry. Together, freshmen Isa Lucas-Zerbe, Ella McCurley, Sophie Jenkins, Stasia Sullivan, and Moana Mao, sophomores Zoe Osborn and Alex Riggs, juniors Thea Lamers, Acacia Castillo, and Aitana Martinez, and led by senior Shoni Rheinschmidt, made the NPA community proud.

Though they both have prior experience in coaching, this was Warner and Lucas’s first year being involved with the NPA girl’s basketball season. Both Warner and Lucas have ex-

perience coaching various basketball teams in the past, in addition to Lucas’s time spent as a swimming

“We are always supportive towards each other. There was no negativity when we were practicing or playing, and it makes it really enjoyable no matter how much we’re not winning.”

Acacia Castillo, junior

coach.

Despite being newcomers and inexperienced in coaching the girls’ team, the players took an immediate liking towards them. “I love [Warner and Lucas],” remarked Castillo, “honestly, this was the best year of basketball we’ve ever had.” Throughout the season, the

team bonded both on and off of the court. “They were great coaches and really brought the team together,” expressed Lamers. “When we were out there on the court, we would work together and hang out as a team. It’s just great!”

Though the girl’s team didn’t win any games this season, their sportsmanship is what has continually earned them respect. The players’ attitudes of support towards not only each other, but towards their adversaries created an enjoyable game for both teams. “We are always supportive towards each other. There was no negativity when we were practicing or playing, and it makes it really enjoyable no matter how much we’re not winning,” commented Castillo.

Every chance he got, Warner would stress the idea of “never getting down on each other and always doing your best,” which the players implemented well. The majority of their season was full



PHOTO BY AMAYA BECHLER

Freshman Isa Lucas-Zerbe looking to pass the ball. Lucas-Zerbe is one of four freshman who brought new energy to the girl’s basketball team.

of tough blowouts, but they fought hard and refused to give up, and on January 15, they gave St. Bernard’s an interesting game, resulting in a 15 point loss for NPA at the final buzzer. “No matter if we are getting beaten by 50 [points] or not, the girls still bring the same kind of energy by being supportive of each other and not getting down on themselves,” said Lucas.

Warner and Lucas both expressed interest in the possibility of coaching future NPA teams. “It’s nice to have some continuity of players, and I think they can win some games next year,” said Warner with optimism. Though this season was not statistically the best in terms of wins, that never caused the positive attitude from the players, coaches, or fans to falter.



PHOTOS BY AMAYA BECHLER

TOP LEFT: Aitana Martinez (left) and Sophie Jenkins (right) playing defense. BOTTOM LEFT: Moana Mao (far left) retrieving a jump ball. TOP RIGHT: Acacia Castillo passing to a teammate. BOTTOM RIGHT: Isa Lucas-Zerbe diving for and securing a loose ball, emblematic of the hustle and determination that defined the team this season.



Poetry Out Loud

By Amaya Bechler
Staff Writer

Imagine giving a voice to the words of Queen Elizabeth I or illustrating the connection between humans and nature, simply by reciting a poem. Students at NPA’s annual Poetry Out Loud contest gave powerful emotion and liveliness to the poems they presented this year.

Poetry Out Loud is a national competition which entails students choosing and memorizing two poems, then presenting them to a board of judges. This year, NPA’s evaluators included teachers Michael Masinter, Marceau Verdiere, and Sara Hammoutene, as well as parent Bridget Cataldo.

Students are graded both on their presentation of the poem as well as their accuracy, and assigned places. This year’s winner was junior Eva Pearlingi, who presented two poems titled “More lies,” and “I know, I remember, but how can I help you?”

Pearlingi then progressed to the regional competition at Eureka High School. “I placed third out of three, but that’s alright, it was very fun,” she said. Reflecting on the meaning of her poems, she explained that “in the poem “More Lies,” the person’s talking about pretending they have a sister, but I actually have a sister. Sometimes I forget how cool it is to actually have a sister, so it’s a nice reminder.”

Another student who took part in Poetry Out Loud was senior Jane McCaffrey. Mc-

“I enjoy doing Poetry Out Loud because it gives me the opportunity to explore new poetry. [...] and any opportunity to perform is really important to me.”

Jane McCaffrey, senior

Caffrey has done Poetry Out Loud for each of her four years of high school. For the past three years, she’s chosen the same poem - “On Monsieur’s Departure” by Queen Elizabeth I. “It’s about her struggle choosing between love and being a strong leader,” said McCaffrey.

“I enjoy doing Poetry Out Loud because it gives me the opportunity to explore new poetry,” reflected McCaffrey. Part of the competition involves selecting poems from an online list, which allows students to explore a variety of poems.

McCaffrey is also a dedicated and experienced actress, another reason Poetry Out Loud is significant to her. “Any opportunity to perform is really important to me,” she said. “There’s emotion in poetry. I get too involved in the emotion of the poem and lose track of the accuracy.”

Whether they’re in it for the competitive aspect, performing experience, or love of poetry, NPA students who chose to take part in this event make the most of Poetry Out Loud.

A day in the life of an elections poll worker

By Ari Alter
Staff Writer

An average day for most California election poll workers consists of waking up at five in the morning, arriving at your voting facility an hour later, and working until 10 p.m. Poll workers are tasked with setting up amenities for their precinct, making sure voters are not committing fraud, and then getting their ballot. The clerks and inspectors who run voting precincts across the state do this every time the public has an election, and while working at the polls is monotonous, requires great attention to detail, and is low paying, it can also result in an experience which is rewarding and wholesome.

Working at a precinct in any given election requires attention to detail while completing

very mundane tasks. An election worker must constantly make sure everything is in order, that people are not committing voter fraud, and that nothing ever goes unaccounted-for. Throughout the day, workers must count every ballot twice in order to make sure that no one has tried to vote multiple times or has attempted to steal ballots. They must also make sure that no mistakes were made in the County Office of Elections during preparation of all the items for each precinct. Signs must be posted inside and outside of the facility, notifying people of the specific directions for how to vote and where to go for each step of the process. It is important that voting booths and ballot-counting machines be set up properly, so that the site may be ready to open by seven in the morning, which is just the beginning to an extremely

long day.

Once 7 a.m. hits, the precinct opens and voters begin to cast their ballots. Clerks are assigned a station to work at, either checking people in or making sure they have the correct ballot and all other items they need to cast it. This can become an extremely tedious task, as a worker will continue doing this for all 13 hours that each precinct is open. Those employed must also be scrutinous while doing this, as a single mistake can skew results at the end of the night, forcing all of the election workers to work additional hours until the issue has been fixed. Taking into consideration that a worker is paid a fixed amount for the day, adding the extra time needed to fix any mistakes is not a welcome option.

Regardless of its drawbacks, working at the polls can be very rewarding in that seeing the looks on voters’ faces can make all of the repetitiveness of the day worthwhile. Despite whether or not you agree with the ballot someone casts or not, seeing people ea-

ger to partake in the democratic process by voting is an important and inspiring sight. Whether they are elderly voters who have been casting ballots for years, or young voters who are able to vote for the first time, the smile on their face when they cast their ballot makes it all worth it.

In addition, meeting and getting to know the people you are working with throughout the day is a rewarding experience in itself. In some Humboldt County precincts that are less busy, all of the workers make a potluck and share a meal together, cementing a connection between people who were otherwise unlikely to become acquaintances or friends. Even if the hours are long and the work is low paying, the inside look into a voter’s experience casting their ballot, the new friends you make with the people who are working beside you, and the contribution to the democracy you are a part of make being a poll worker constructive and inspiring.



Alice: Adventures In Wonderland

NPA reimagines the classic tale under a new director

By Zoe Osborn
Staff Writer

Murmurs echoed around HSU's Gist Hall as the audience eagerly awaited the start of the show. Director Trish "The Dish" Riel waltzed out onto the whimsically-decorated stage, sporting a neon green top hat. Greeting the audience, she gave a standard directorial spiel, talking briefly about the experience she'd had over the past two weeks and thanking various people associated with the production. Upon finishing her speech, she promptly left the stage, the lights dimmed, and NPA's *Alice: Adventures in Wonderland* began. The first-performance was held on the 30th of January, but the production ran for three more days (a total of 4 performances) ending with a bang on the 1st of February.

The plot of *Alice in Wonderland* is a familiar one, however there are many different versions to date. Each production is unique and this was no exception, as the script was adapted by NPA junior Oliver Schroeder and was a conglomeration of pre-existing versions, while developing original themes and messages. This version set itself apart with distinctly outlined motifs of childhood and the subsequent loss of innocence and imagination. "Sometimes as we grow up, we have a lot of things that are expected of us. It's good to remember to keep your childlike nature close, so you continue to have fun no matter how grownup you get," explained Riel. The play was mainly composed of original dialogue and quotes from the book by Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures*

in *Wonderland* including the well-known riddle: "why is a raven like a writing desk?"

As for the songs, Schroeder says that they were sourced from a variety of musical productions of this story. Not only did he adapt this play (a unique feat not usually taken on by NPA students), but he also took on numerous other roles. "I helped direct a couple scenes, which was good insight into the work that goes on as a director. I was helping mostly backstage, and I got to work a lot with costuming," Schroeder noted, add that "it's hard to see your work directed by someone else, but in the end I think it ended up really well done."

Riel, nicknamed "Trish the Dish," was the main director. This nickname was acquired during her freshman year of college where



PHOTO BY AMAYA BECHLER

Senior Finn Tetrault (left) as the Mad Hatter and junior Logan Smith (right) as the March Hare on stage during a performance.

everyone in her dorm had rhyming nicknames. She says that whenever anyone guesses what "Trish the Dish" means she tells them that their guess is right even if it isn't. New to NPA, she was surprised by the sense of inclusive authority and independence she had as a director. However, she was also not expecting the high number of students included in the process and thought that it would have been helpful to have another adult present to help direct the crew and publicity team and keep them all focused. She says that "directing is a big job on its own," and in addition she found herself becoming more of a producer as well. She did note that "all of the performers were really good about contributing their ideas," and that there were many people whose focus and commitment made the play turn out to be what it was.

Among these performers was senior Jane McCaffrey, who played the titular role of Alice. McCaffrey, who is a more seasoned actress with three NPA plays under her belt, in addition to outside productions, still learned something new. "For this play specifically, I was in every scene all the time and was al-

ways there. [However], even though I was always there, I usually wasn't the main focus of what was going on. So I got to work a lot on reacting and having a big reaction to things that would also read well to the audience," she explained. Of course, learning is easier when the material is of interest. McCaffrey was a fan of the story before this production and said that she "really enjoyed it, [as she] truly love[s] the character [Alice], and grew to love her even more."

Another actress who was passionate about their role was Junior Cosmo Bernstein, the Queen of Hearts. On the Queen of Hearts, Bernstein said that, "a lot of her character comes from the way she presents herself. There are a lot of different adaptations of Alice in Wonderland and so I tried to channel some of the Helena Bonham Carter version from the [2010 film], because that's how I wanted to present my character, not only in how she looked, but also less angry and crazy and more controlling."

However, unlike Helena Bonham Carter, Bernstein and all of the other actors didn't have much time to rehearse due to the NPA standard of a two week time

slot. It's often a scramble to put together a presentable show and many students related to the famous "we're all mad here," quote from the Cheshire Cat. McCaffrey said that, "it sounds crazy, but I don't think [the time crunch is too stressful]. I think it's been successful every year, and we've always put on really great productions considering the time limit, and even not considering it."

All aspects of the production taken into account, the play ended up being well received. NPA sophomore Lily Hodges remarked that "all of the acting and singing was amazing, and everyone was so talented." From an alternate directorial point of view, the production was a success. "People [in the audience] were laughing and crying simultaneously. That's just good theater," said Riel. Most importantly, however, NPA's production of *Alice: Adventures in Wonderland* answers the famous riddle "why is a raven like a writing desk?" the answer being that "it can produce a few good notes, though they are very flat; and it is never put with the wrong end in front."



PHOTO BY AMAYA BECHLER

Juniors Luis Roquero, Eva Pearlingi, and senior Jane McCaffrey on stage during the famous croquet scene in NPA's production of Alice in Wonderland.

"We're teenagers, and we're changing the world"

One student's experience participating in a global youth summit for climate activism

By Juan-Nikolas Engel
Staff Writer

In February of this year, I was a part of the biggest summit for middle and high school students ever hosted by the Sunrise Movement. The Sunrise Movement is coordinated by Sunrise, a political organization trying to stop the climate crisis and create millions of high quality jobs in the process. At the summit, students from all over the United States participated in learning how to lead others in climate advocacy and how to react to the climate emergency which we are all facing right now.

In November of 2019, I founded the Climate Act Club at NPA. We have done presentations about the climate crisis at city council meetings in Trinidad and Arcata as well as organized beach clean-ups with NPA's Ocean Protection Club, and every Friday after school we had a climate crisis demonstration at the Arcata Plaza. Our goal is to protect the environment and our future. Jack West, a Trinidad City Council member helped us to organize a presentation at the Trinidad City Council meeting in January, as well as introducing me to the Sunrise Movement when he forwarded me an email with the heading "We're teenagers, and we're changing the world." In the email, the Sunrise Movement was explaining that they were planning to have their biggest summit for middle and high schoolers that February. After reading the email, I applied and was very happy when I got accepted. The Climate Change Summit started on the 14th and ended on the 17th of February, and was held at the Columbia Heights Educational Campus in Washington D.C. The main goal of the summit was to teach students how to plan climate actions, recruit people and lead a group, club or hub of climate activists.

From the beginning of the summit, everybody was very friendly. My first impression was that everyone was very motivated to take action against the climate emergency. Most of the 150 participants were between 14-18 years old and came from all over the US. Everybody represented a hub, club, school, or region local to where they lived, and I represented the Climate Act Club and NPA. The day after I arrived, the opening ceremony was held, including an introduction to the Summit and the Sunrise Movement, which was very motivating as we sang songs together, which created an amazing atmosphere of solidarity.

We had facilitators and chaperones who helped us at the summit. Every student was assigned to a small group of six to eight people with a facilitator, for the purpose of having small discussions after meetings and presentations. The facilitator for my group was Abby DiNardo, a high school student from Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. She was very dedicated in guiding our group discussions, which made it possible for everybody in the group to get to know each other well and to become friends. "Throughout the weekend, we built up solidarity and love for each other," explained DiNardo, whose feelings were shared by many others at the summit.

Every day, all participants would walk from a church, where we slept, to the Columbia Heights Education Campus, where we stayed until the evening. On Saturday and Sunday we had two incredible workshops, and could decide if we wanted to learn more about "Meeting Facilitation," "Recruitment," "Developing Leadership," "Public Narrative," "Art Build and Creative Strategy," or "How to Plan Action." On Saturday, I chose "Meeting Facilitation," and on Sunday "Developing Leadership." Both workshops were incredibly interesting and very interactive. We learned that facilitators try to have everybody included in the conversation and that when developing leadership it is important to support and motivate everyone in your group.

On Saturday evening it was revealed that we were going to have a demonstration in the Capitol building on Monday, which was President's Day. The next evening, we had our last meeting, where we prepared for the demonstration. Monday morning, the day of the demonstration, we had to wake up at 6:30 am to pack our belongings before heading to the Capitol building. Along the way, we stopped at a park, where we had breakfast and talked about our plan for the demonstration. Our group of 150 students arrived at the capital at 10 am, and an hour later, we unfurled a large banner inside, marking the start of the demonstration. We stood stoic in lines and sang a song by Florence Reece called "Which side are you on now?" The lyrics were changed in order to be directed to the

climate crisis, and acted as a sort of plea, asking the senators if they would support the Green New Deal or not. We were also able to give one presentation, but after a short period of time, the police arrived. We had three major teams at our demonstration: the green team, who would leave when the police warned us the first time, then a yellow team who would leave the scene when we were warned a second time, and lastly the red team who was willing to get arrested and sacrifice their liberty for the purpose of making the urgency of the climate crisis clear. I was part of the green team, leaving immediately after the first warning. Suddenly, chaos broke out because the police announced their second and third warnings in a short period of time and were shouting through megaphones that we were "in the process of getting arrested if [we didn't] put [our] posters away right now!" After putting our posters away we had to leave the capitol and walked to Union Square, where after giving a few presentations, we sang a song, marking the moment when the Sunrise Summit officially ended for all of us.

After wrapping up the summit, many of us went to greet those who had been arrested and later released. When everybody was released we went back to the place where our luggage was and started to say goodbye to each other. It was an emotional and happy ending. During my flight back to Arcata I was already missing the friends I had made, but at the same moment, I felt hope when I thought about how there are now 150 more students who will do their part to save the planet and our future.

To my dear reader, I hope I have been able to give you insight into the biggest Sunrise Movement Summit for middle and high schoolers thus far, and arouse in you the feeling of the responsibility we all have in protecting our future. The climate crisis has to be stopped right now and therefore we need the Green New Deal, which would be the first step in letting the planet recover. We have the ability to save this planet, but this decade is our last chance and whether you act or not will be your contribution to this fight and will determine what the future will look like. There is hope, but in order to have a change, we need you and everybody to react.



PHOTO BY JUAN-NIKOLAS ENGEL

The Sunrise Summit's Climate Crisis Demonstration took place at the United States Capitol in Washington D.C. on February 17th and was attended by 150 student participants from across the country.



A lively debate

Freeman’s Senior History Class Continues Debate Tradition

By Abigail Hasting-Tharp
Staff Writer

Eyes stared in anticipation as a group of seniors made their way to the front of the Arcata United Methodist Church sanctuary to begin this year’s mock democratic primary debates. Having thoroughly researched each of their candidates, NPA’s senior History class presented their mock 2020 Democratic Primary Debate to the entire student body, making a special Tuesday all-school period. The mock debates were an educational experience for everyone who witnessed them. With the primaries being at the forefront of national media, learning about their workings through this mock-debate format was unique. This presentation mimicked the format used in the current Democratic Primaries, a subject of contemporary global relevance. This year’s senior debate was very special, because while past debates have featured elections in other branches of government and have pertained to California propositions, the 2020 mock-debates were focused on the upcoming presidential election. Since President Donald Trump is the declared running member of the Republican party, the Democratic primaries were the topic of interest for Andrew Freeman’s IB History class.

Each participating senior selected a candidate to study and represent. “It took a long time to figure out who would be playing who,” said senior Melissa Horne, who portrayed Andrew Yang, who dropped out of the race shortly before the selected date for the seniors to present. This was the case for a number of the candidates, leaving minimal options for the seniors to depict. In the end, the decision was made to include candidates that had already dropped out and ended their campaign. In addition to Horne, four other seniors took on the role of candidates: Omega Gaskill as Joe Biden, Autumn Wright as Bernie Sanders, Erin Le as Elizabeth Warren, and Maya Hergenrader as Pete Buttigieg. In addition to this cast, Valentine Lučić and Sophia Stenger hosted the debate as emcees, and Freeman acted as the debate mediator.

The event began with each candidate delivering an opening statement about themselves. The students were encouraged not to mimic the candidates’ mannerisms and instead to focus on their viewpoints.

In preparation for contending as Elizabeth Warren, Le made a point to focus on “representing the main points of [Warren’s] policies in a clear and concise manner.” Le felt this was straightforward to achieve, as most of Warren’s beliefs can be found on her campaign website.

After introducing the candidates, the debate began. Seated in the front row of the sanctuary pews, a team of Heron Herald reporters asked questions about relevant global topics such as gun safety, global warming, and healthcare. Each of the five seniors had three minutes to respond with the standpoint of their candidate.

“Before I chose to represent [Bernie Sanders], I wasn’t fully aware of all of his policies,” recounted Wright. Through the mock-debate process, she developed a deeper understanding for the opinions of all five candidates. With many democratic presidential candidates having similar ideals, Wright believes that detailed research is the key to setting them apart from each other.

The debate ended with closing statements from each candidate, an opportunity for the candidates to summarize their overall message. The goal of this activity was to educate not only the seniors participating, but to get all of NPA involved in the democratic process. “Remember to stay involved and aware of what’s happening in the political world,” shared Horne, concluding that “it’s everyone’s civic duty to be informed and participate in politics.”

Serenity in Sweden

By Abigail Hasting-Tharp
Staff Writer

Enthusiasm and encouragement for international travel make up an essential part of what fosters a global perspective at NPA, especially in its student body. Because of this, NPA has a rich connection with its sister schools around the world. This past February, eight NPA juniors and seniors embarked on a trip to Sweden and Austria, looking to strengthen the bond between NPA and its Swedish affiliate, Biskops Arnö Nordens Folkhögskola, and to create valuable memories. In attendance were seniors Gale McComas, Melissa Horne, Maya Hergenrader, Aiden Cataldo, and Ronny Whitlatch, as well as juniors Dimitri Cox, Aiden Vayo, and Natasha Anderson. Chaperoning this adventure was NPA principal and theater teacher Dr. Jean Bazemore and her close friend, Tibora Bea Girczyc-Blum.

Kicking the adventure off, the group flew to Vienna, Austria. Juan-Nikolas Engel, an Austrian exchange student at NPA, played a major role in making the Viennese leg of the trip happen smoothly, facilitating the group’s stay with Engel’s classmates from the Vienna Waldorf School, where they attended classes. “I

was trying to make a partnership between our schools,” remarked Engel about the exchange, commenting that “this whole thing was the first step.”

Engel’s efforts to start a sister-school connection between the Austrian Waldorf school Rudolf-Steiner Schule Pötzleinsdorf and NPA resulted in a meaningful experience for everyone involved. Horne loved the time she spent in Vienna, recalling that it was a “really fun, laid back city.” Anderson was very fond of the food in Vienna, noting that the city is famous for their delicious schnitzel, a breaded chicken dish. Some of her favorite memories from the group’s time there include going up into the hills outside of the city. “It had just snowed and we had this cute little snowball fight,” recalled Anderson. “That was probably one of my favorite days [of the trip].”

Following their time in Vienna, the NPA crew headed for Sweden. They stopped briefly in Stockholm to see an opera and to explore, before continuing on to the island of Biskops Arnö, where the NPA students stayed in the school’s dorms and explored the school’s grounds.

The Swedish continuation school has a large focus on artistic expression, with tons of options for learning, practicing, and expressing artistic skills -



La Vie en Confinement

By Nai’a Ryman
Guest Writer

Guest writer and NPA sophomore Nai’a Ryman provides insight into life during the COVID-19 pandemic while on international student exchange in France. This dispatch was sent to the Heron Herald in mid-April, and France has since lifted its stay at home order. The COVID-19 death toll in France stands at 27,400 as of May 15th. Nai’a remains in France, completing her semester abroad schoolwork online, while continuing to live with her host family.

France has been on an officially mandated lockdown since March 17, yet many families have been protecting themselves with self-isolation since before the announcement was made. Initially, the lockdown was set to last for two weeks, although the government made it clear that it would likely be extended. Currently, France is under strict lockdown orders until April 15, but again, this date is likely to be pushed back. All non-essential trips outside the home are prohibited and everyone is required to have a signed and dated permission slip with a justified reason for outside activity every time they leave the house. If one does leave the house, the activity should be done alone to have the least chances of spreading the virus. France has upped their police presence to patrol neighborhoods during this time of isolation, checking identity and justification forms of people in cars and on the streets. If anyone is without form, they face a €135 fine, which increases with every offense. More than 20 French towns have imposed extra controls such as curfews or bans regarding travel to certain areas.

More than 350,000 people have been fined in France for not following the rules during the lockdown, according to the interior minister.

In the beginning, many French citizens refused to heed to the government’s orders to stay home and avoid public places, leading to the government having to seriously increase the lockdown measures to remove incentives to leave home, including the closure of most businesses, shops, cafes, restaurants, theaters, clubs, and bars.

“At first at the start of March, the virus wasn’t really a concern, we heard about the severity in Italy but we had no idea that the same thing could happen here. When we heard that the schools would close on March 12, students went to parties, we celebrated, we were completely blind to the mess that we would soon be living in,” French student Jose Guitteny said in an online interview. After French President Emmanuel Macron announced the first order of school closures, bars and clubs were flooded with students, partying in celebration, only to close days after.

Easter marks the beginning of the yearly “grand départ,” when millions of French citizens head to the coast and countryside for the holiday. “There must be no departure on holiday,” French prime minister Édouard Philippe said, warning citizens that “the virus is not on holiday,” as he continues to urge citizens to oblige the strict rules which have been put in place. The COVID-19 epidemic has already taken more than 12,000 lives in France, and many say that this number has not yet reached its peak.

Coronavirus patient evacuations that began in late March continue in order to avoid hospital overcrowding in France and all of Europe. “This



similarities which are clear between Biskops Arnö and NPA.

With its strong focus in the arts, Biskops Arnö is a place students go and “hone their craft,” as phrased by Horne. She elaborated to say that the alternative school is not diploma or result-orientated, instead being focused on the skills which students develop during their time at the school. The island has a gorgeous terrain unlike anything in Humboldt County, and many students noted the serenity they found upon arriving. “Walking around the island by myself was really nice,” said Anderson, noting that it was interesting to be

in a natural environment so different from Humboldt County. On any given walk, it was normal to encounter the flock of wild swans that would roam freely on the island. In addition to attending classes with students at the school, opportunities to simply hangout were valued greatly. “I really liked hanging out with the students at Biskops Arnö and going to the saunas on the island and jumping in the lake,” said Anderson. For her, it was experiences like these that helped sculpt her worldview for the better. “My outlook on life is a lot different now.”



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GALE MCCOMAS
(Left) Melissa Horne stands in front of the Belvedere Palace museum in Vienna, Austria. **(Right, from left to right)** Students Aiden Vayo, Ronny Whitlatch, Dimitri Cox, Melisa Horne and Natasha Anderson stand on the piano stairs at Haus der Musik, a museum dedicated to music in Vienna, Austria.

crisis is causing pain and loss for families, people are losing loved ones every day because of a shortage of medical devices, they shouldn’t have to die,” said seventeen-year-old student Eulalie Menard, as she spoke about the severe lack of vital supplies such as ventilators, medication, and hospital beds. “Doctors choose who lives and who dies,” Menard stated in an online interview.

As this epidemic continues to unfold, screening of the population is becoming more and more crucial in identifying asymptomatic carriers who can infect others. Previously, France has only been testing small groups of healthcare workers and people with severe symptoms. In the past weeks, the government has provided funding to drastically increase the number of tests to about 20,000 people a day, and plan to increase further to 50,000 per day by the end of April, and 100,000 per day by the end of June, according to information provided by Health Minister Olivier Véran.

As COVID-19 cases unfolded

into the Easter holiday, communities displayed strength and unity even under challenging living conditions. “[The virus] showed the power in the people that we have and how we can support each other with or without the government. The economy, the structure of our whole world is held up by everyday people like you and me, not by the rich, not our presidents, but us,” said 79 year old Pierre Moysan, in the hopes of shining some light in this dark time. Despite the ways in which the epidemic progresses during the coming weeks, communities are standing together to fight the tremendous effect it is having on their lives and their economy. Even as restrictions continually increase, the citizens of France remain hopeful. The government is doing everything they can to keep their people safe, from closing businesses and enacting fines, to making room in hospitals, even if their measures seem intense. Everyone is concerned about the public’s health, but everyone can also be sure that we will get through this, and end stronger on the other side.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAI’A RYMAN
On international exchange in France, sophomore Nai’a Ryman enjoys an evening at Paris’ famous Eiffel Tower.



ESSENTIAL

from page 1

it's the tireless work of Humboldt County officials and healthcare workers that has undoubtedly kept the public safe from some of the more dire consequences regarding the spread of COVID-19.

Susanna Gibson (NPA sophomore Harvey Mitchell's mom) an employee at Saint Joseph's Plastic Surgery Clinic for Saint Joseph Health System found the response to COVID-19 in Humboldt County to be a swift one. "I think that Humboldt County and the State of California did a great job," she explained. "I think that our county officials and our governor took this very seriously early on, which I really appreciated from a medical standpoint and as someone with children and with a family because it's scary for us, we're the first to see these sick people."

Joanna Rincon-Taylor, a registered nurse and mother of NPA junior Olivia Joachim, who works for Saint Joseph Hospital in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) concurs. "In my opinion, Dr. Teresa Frankovich and her team at Humboldt County Public Health and the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office have done an excellent job especially given our rural and remote location. I have personally appreciated their frequent and timely updates. Their coordinated efforts continue to have realistic views on the challenges our community has the potential to face," Rincon-Taylor noted.

Despite the fast action and

"This is going to be a marathon and not a sprint to get through [COVID-19]."

Jim Peaker, Saint Joseph Health

strong leadership in Humboldt County amidst this pandemic, there has still been an unavoidable cloud of uncertainty plaguing hospitals everywhere, especially as the first cases began cropping up in the United States. "The initial response was a lot of scrambling, I think everybody presumed that this wave of coronavirus was going to be hitting Humboldt County and by late March we'd have the hospital filled to capacity and we'd be scrambling for ventilators. There were a lot of frantic preparations working to convert hospital rooms that were meant for regular patients into one that could work with negative pressure where air is pulled into the room so the coronavirus can't escape into the hallway (a necessary precaution in preventing COVID-19 from traveling)" commented Area Director for Rehabilitation Services for Saint Joseph Health, Jim Peaker,

sophomore Jaxon Peaker's father. Thanks to many resolute healthcare workers, these efforts in preparing Saint Joseph Hospital for COVID-19 have been successful. The hospital's staff was able to convert a 30-bed medical unit into a special respiratory unit as well as preparing off-site buildings that could be used if needed for inpatient care.

St. Joseph Medical Director of the Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit in Rehab Services, Charles Knoll, said "the hospital impressed me, I think we have great leadership in the hospital. One thing that helps is that our chief executive is an infectious disease specialist, so she's not only a good leader but she also knows the science behind what's going on." New precautions include healthcare workers having their temperature checked when they come in for work, universal masking, and restrictions on visitors.

Another change that has been made since the beginning of this outbreak is the utilization of telehealth. "Telehealth is a form of medicine that is virtual based. It includes phone conversation with a doctor and a patient as well as video conferencing" explained Gibson. "We didn't use it all for the Saint Joe system before the coronavirus, now we use it quite a bit and it looks like we'll be incorporating that into our daily routines after the coronavirus has calmed down as well for people who live far away or have trouble coming into the office."

Telehealth has been beneficial for patients requiring services that have been shut down to the bare minimum such as therapy clinics, physicians offices, and sleep disorder centers. Initially, only patients that were at a risk for permanent disability were able to meet in person with their doctors. Once the number of cases began to fall below the more extreme predictions, healthcare workers realized the longevity of dealing with and adapting to this pandemic. "Now we're looking at how we can reopen some of those services while still providing security and protection," said Peaker.

While the continued use of telehealth will be a positive change after COVID-19 has subsided, it is unlikely that life will go back to how it was before the pandemic. "Life will be different," explained Rincon-Taylor. "There will be things that don't go back to the way they were in December of 2019. COVID-19 isn't the first or last virus to spread rapidly through a population. We are living during what will be a historic event and we are going to have to come together to find new ways to create a sustainable new normal," she said.

The importance of working together is something that all of these healthcare workers have stressed. Whether it's community members sewing face masks or using 3D printers and home laminators to meet the demand at Saint Joseph's for one thousand face shields, "we've had a lot of community support," said Peaker. "One thing I've been really pleased about is how well Humboldt has adhered to social distancing, and that's helped a lot because that means we feel safer in the hospital because it's less likely that someone walking through the door has COVID-19," commented Knoll.

Social distancing and mask-wearing are two simple but

"There will be things that don't go back to the way they were. [...] We are living during what will be a historic event and we are going to have to come together to find new ways to create a sustainable new normal."

Joanna Rincon-Taylor, registered nurse

effective ways that everyone can help keep not only themselves safe from COVID-19 but also those who are in higher risk demographics. "What I've seen, it looks like Humboldt County has done a good job. At one point we were looking at dire predictions of us all just getting overrun in the hospital. So the fact that our numbers are still relatively low and we're not swamped is pretty encouraging," said Knoll. Keeping yourself healthy is a crucial step in not overwhelming hospitals and keeping healthcare workers who are on the frontlines safe because, as Rincon-Taylor has experienced, "it has been stressful, emotional, and at moments, scary."

However, if you do potentially have COVID-19, it's important to get tested. Gibson attests that the Saint Joseph health system "has the capacity to test people even if they are not sick." She gave the example of people coming back from traveling. She says that showing symptoms is no longer a requirement for getting tested. She finds "that it's really great because it helps people feel a lot safer." Peaker elaborated that "there should not be undue fear that coming to the hospital is not the place to go, this is where they can take the best care of you. This is going to be a marathon and not a sprint to get through this." Rincon-Taylor noted that ultimately "no matter your profession, we all have been affected by this pandemic. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem."

The effects of COVID-19 on local businesses

By Nikita Van Nordstrand
Staff Writer

The recent outbreak of COVID-19 has brought many things to a halt, including school, social events, and the operations of many businesses in Humboldt County. Social distancing is encouraged, and in some cases enforced in order to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19. Of course, this is a necessary safety precaution, but it disproportionately affects local and family-owned businesses.

To minimize opportunities of COVID-19 transmission, businesses are being divided into two categories: essential and nonessential. Essential businesses include health care operations, essential manufacturing, and essential retail such as grocery stores and restaurants. Nonessential businesses include theatres, museums, entertainment centers, and libraries - things that we don't need to survive, and thus, don't need to remain open during a crisis.

Bella Mazzotti, a sophomore at Arcata High School works part-time at her family's restaurant, Mazzottis on the Plaza. As a restaurant, they are considered an essential business, for which Mazzotti is very thankful. But this classification doesn't come without stress. "Mainly [it's] just not knowing what tomorrow will bring," admitted Mazzotti. "Though we have been busy, that could change really quickly, and the restaurant is my family's only source of income." To Mazzotti, COVID-19 isn't the main concern for the restaurant, as several safety measures have been put in place. Only one person at the register comes into contact with customers, and anyone who handles food doesn't come into contact with customers. "Most of our customers are people who have regularly eaten at the restaurant in the past. They seem very thankful," said Mazzotti. De-

spite their luck, Mazzotti sees coronavirus as an overall negative for small businesses. "I think most [small businesses] will never financially recover from this, and would rather close than go into debt trying to stay open. The ones that do stay will be forever changed in the way they operate," she said.

What about the businesses that have been forced to close? Kim Alexandra, owner of Nest, an art collective and furniture store in Fortuna, was told to close her stores on March 23rd. Art is considered nonessential, which is financially concerning for local artists, but she's staying optimistic. "I'm using this time to get caught up," said Alexandra. She's been spending her time cleaning, repairing her store, and creating things. As someone with underlying health conditions, she's thankful to be social distancing, and believes the recommended safety precautions to be more than necessary. "I don't think the current precautions are enough, but people don't seem to be following them anyway, which scares me. I think everything should be closed until the end of May at least," said Alexandra. Her initial concerns were financial, but she said that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act has been very helpful. The CARES Act was passed by Congress on March 27th, and is a \$2 trillion dollar relief package for American workers and businesses. "The CARES Act brought so much relief," shared Alexandra. "I feel like I can finally get back to what I do, and get ready to reopen."

Humboldt County has always been known for its local businesses and art community. Although the future of these businesses is speculative, there is plenty of hope for them, thanks to the support being shown by the community.

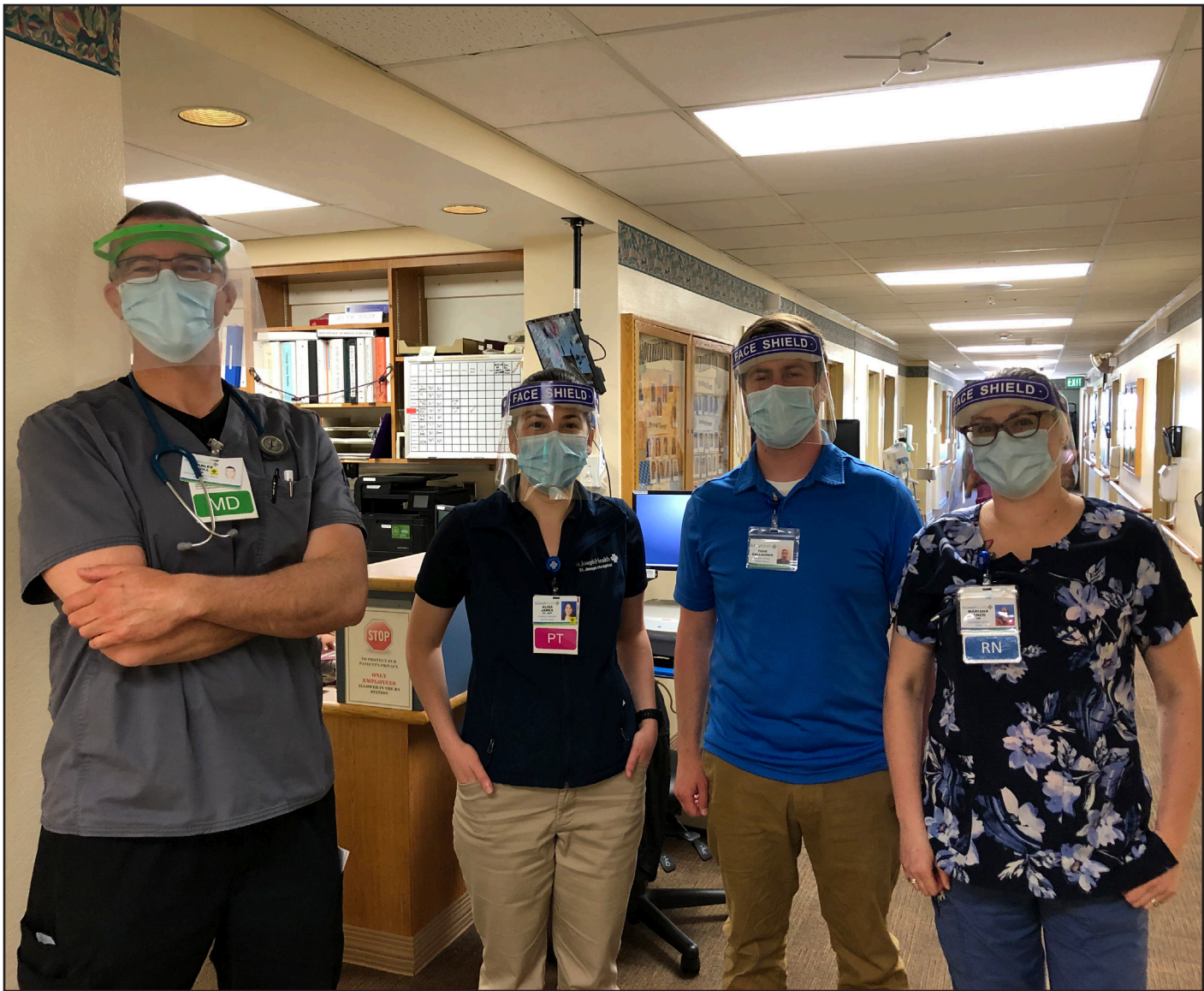


PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM PEAKER
(Left to right) Dr. Charles Knoll, PT Alisa James, Todd Gallagher, and RN Mariana Bench at St. Joseph's are working with their colleagues to provide medical support during this COVID-19 outbreak.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BELLA MAZZOTTI
Arcata High sophomore Bella Mazzotti in her family restaurant, Mazzotti's on the Arcata Plaza.



A country steeped in tradition

An in-depth look inside NPA’s trips to India

By Omega Gaskill
Staff Writer

The smog in the frigid air was palpable to the group of NPA travellers as they stepped off of the plane in Delhi, India in the early hours of the morning on December 29, having just flown more than halfway around the world. After travelling for more than 72 hours through three different countries (including the U.S., Shanghai, China where the group had a layover, and finally India) the group blearily made their way through the ancient city on foot and by way of train before settling into their hotel rooms for some much needed rest and to acclimate to their new surroundings before embarking upon the rest of their trip.

Visitors to India are often met with unfamiliar sights, smells, and sounds, and NPA’s group was no exception. Whether it be one’s first, or tenth time in the great Indian subcontinent, the evidence of its rich cultural history is apparent around every turn.

For the group of 12 NPA students and their three chaperones who spent nearly a month participating in acts of cultural exchange, the trip marked both a homecoming and the start of new beginnings for all. As classmates and friends, juniors Abby Hasting-Tharp, Aiden Miele, Ailani Hanshaw, Caleb Weiss, Garrett Leach, Lea Eider, Logan Smith, Olivia Joachim, Ruby Devoe, Slate Taylor, and Thea Lamers, and senior Rayna Pearlringi made their way from Arcata, California to Delhi, India under the guidance of trip leaders Adam Hess, Sophia Pelafigue, and parent chaperone Emily Hanshaw.

For Pelafigue, this trip marked her third time in India, having been one of those originally involved with cultivating NPA’s steady relationship with its sister school Anand Vidya Vihar (AVV) in 2016, as well as travelling to Vadodara, Gujarat independently with her daughter Amelia Parker in 2016. Parker is a 2018 NPA alumna, and was a part of the school’s second India trip in 2017. Pelafigue was inspired along with NPA history teacher Andrew Freeman to further the school’s ties with AVV, which blossomed when the first group of AVV students visited Humboldt in the spring of 2016 for a two week cultural exchange. They were able to explore the county and experience life at NPA while being hosted by families including Pelafigue’s own, who hosted Nand Javia.

“The first group was a really diverse [set] of kids who came from all levels of [AVV’s] economic spectrum,” recollected Pelafigue. She attributed the success of the program to those at AVV who witnessed firsthand

the benefits that world travel has to offer, and in coming to the U.S. in particular. “I was really enamored with their connections with each other, and their intense commitment to family and education,” noted Pelafigue, who found the AVV students to be very different from many of the teenagers she knew at the time, adding that “they’re very outgoing, even amongst adults.”

Having co-led NPA’s second trip to India in late 2017 with Pelafigue and Freeman, Hess experienced a feeling of belonging upon his most recent return to Vadodara, which he owed largely to the connections he had been able to build and maintain years before. Hess’ familiarity with the area and his close relationship with his host family, the Kaur-Sagars gave him a sense of homecoming, as he knew his way around the co-operative housing society where they lived.

Jaswantsingh Sagar and his family have been instrumental in the orchestration of nearly all matters concerning NPA/AVV relations. His oldest daughter, Muskaan Kaur Sagar, participated in a year-long exchange at NPA for the 2017-2018 school year, and their family has hosted travellers from NPA during the past two trips as well as helping to organize key aspects of the trip, like helping to secure host families and planning activities for the group during their stay.

Many of the students were struck, but not surprised by the prominence of religion in the everyday lives of those they met during their trip, owing to the informative after-school meetings held by trip leaders, as well as their personal knowledge on the subject. India is home to nine major religions: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and the Baha’i Faith, and the various sects and factions they divulge into. Beginning on the first day of their trip in Delhi, the group made frequent visits to an assortment of different religious sites in order to better grasp the significance of religion for the vast majority of India’s population. “We would go to many different religious sites, like temples and mosques, and everyone there was super happy and welcoming,” explained Miele, who was hosted by the Thakars, a Hindu family.

The AVV families involved with hosting NPA students and their chaperones practice a multitude of religions including Jainism, Hinduism, and Sikhism, and were eager to educate their guests about their respective faiths and the various practices, adherences, and celebrations that accompany them. “They were very willing to answer my questions about their religion and were very open,” said Joa-



PHOTO BY ABBY HASTING-THARP
Left to right: Emily Hanshaw, Thea Lamer s, Caleb Weiss, Adam Hess, Ruby Devoe, and Ailani Hanshaw spell out “NPA” during a nighttime trip to the artificial gardens near the Statue of Unity in Gujarat, about two hours away from Vadodara, where the group stayed.

chim about her host family, who practice Jainism, and had an area in their home dedicated to a shrine.

Many temples in India serve not only as places of worship, but also provide their congregants with opportunities to receive services such as free meals. In the case of Sikh Gurdwaras, they are available at all hours of the day. NPA students visited one such Gurdwara during their trip, and partook in eating a vegetarian meal alongside countless others seated in long rows on the floor of the Langar hall. The group enjoyed staples such as a flatbread known as roti, rice, daal, which is a lentil dish, vegetables, and a spiced pudding called kheer, prepared by those working in the Gurdwara’s large kitchen.

“After we ate, we went into the kitchen and helped cook roti, and then handed out plates to the next group of people coming into the Gurdwara, so we were able to experience the full circle,” explained Devoe, who, much like the others on the trip, couldn’t help but notice the striking difference between the homeless populations in India and Humboldt. “While there’s a lot of poverty in this country it’s not apparent in the same way,” explained Eider.

It’s easy to see her point of view, as the Indian government’s poor planning in regards to urbanization (among other factors) has been detrimental for its residents. This has resulted in many cities with populations that grow denser with each passing day while simultaneously lacking the structure and resources needed to fix these pressing issues. Often, as they made their way from one destination to the next, the group was approached by impoverished men, women, and children imploring the travellers to spare some money. “Even having known about those things before, they tug at your heart-strings no less,” admitted Hess, who understands that while it’s challenging for students who are approached by those in need not to help them, aside from oc-

asionally sparing a few rupees, the circumstances are often unsafe and the interactions are better left suppressed.

It was often distressing for the NPA students and their chaperones not to be able to help those who were less fortunate than themselves, but the determination propelling their intentions was not lost.

On all of NPA’s international trips, trip leaders prioritize specific aspects of the exchange, namely immersion, learning, experience, and service. “Dive into this experience, let’s not hold back, let’s make sure [we’re being] present, asking questions and learning, [that] we’re seeing, tasting, and smelling new things,” said Hess with enthusiasm as he explained his own take on NPA’s larger philosophy. In the same way as they had on previous India trips, the group was able to engage in the distribution of educational supplies to students in municipal schools with limited resources.

Time and again, this is an eye-opening experience for both those from NPA and the students they meet at the government schools, who may never have met an American in their life. The group from NPA was able to tour the school’s grounds, as well as visiting multiple classrooms for different grade levels where they handed out school supplies including notebooks and pencils. There are organizations like the one NPA visited in Vadodara called Akshaya Patra that prepare food for tens of thousands of students who can’t afford lunches as part of a growing effort to better the state of affairs surrounding India’s educational system.

As is expected when travelling to a place which differs significantly from what one is used to, the NPA students experienced their fair share of culture shock upon arriving in India. “During the first two days you

have to settle into what is a new norm, and there’s really no transition time for that,” admitted Hess, describing his experience with culture shock, explaining how the mass of people and the evidence of the disparity between classes tends to result in being taken aback in an abrupt manner.

The group’s adjustment to the unfamiliar sights and sounds of India was made smoother thanks to the warm welcomes they received at the hands of their host families from AVV. “I was a little apprehensive about living with my host family because I didn’t know how much English they would speak and I didn’t speak any Hindi or Gujarati, [but] everyone was really welcoming, and the hospitality in India is superb,” affirmed Devoe, who added that “it seemed like everyone [there] wants to make you comfortable, as they’re very social and want to get to know you.”

The entire experience was also new for the hosts, who took care in planning excursions for the NPA students or trip leaders whom they hosted. One of Miele’s favorite experiences with his host family was when he and his oldest host brother Tanay Thakar went out for Vada Pav, a potato dumpling in a bread bun, which was spiced more heavily than Miele had anticipated.

Not to be outdone by the Vada Pav, the soda that Miele purchased next was unexpectedly spicier than any which he had experienced, resulting in an afternoon he would not soon forget.

During their time in India, the group ventured out of Vadodara on multiple occasions, in order to deepen their understanding of the country and its many states. In contrast with the 2017 trip to a desert in the northern state of Rajasthan, the most recent group of NPA students traveled East from Gujarat

towards Pakistan to visit The Great Rann of Kutch salt flats, as well as a beach in Bhuj and touring a textile block printing factory. Pelafigue, who had traveled to the salt flats in 2014 with Parker and Javia, found that the students got a lot out of their trip, especially by waking up early to see the sun rise over the desert, which is known to be a truly breathtaking sight.

Nearing the end of their trip, Eider’s host dad invited NPA’s group to his family’s farm in Mandala (which is about an hour south of Vadodara) for the afternoon in a gracious display of India’s famous hospitality. NPA chaperones and students were accompanied by their host families, and traveled to the countryside where they were given a tour of both the farm and a nearby cotton gin. Their stay included flying kites in preparation for Uttarayan, which is Gujarat’s celebration of the transition from winter to summer, and helping to prepare a traditional meal. They were also able to participate in some spirited dances as well as watching vocal performances by NPA junior Garrett Leach and Eider’s host mom, a talented classical Indian vocalist.

There are countless points to be made regarding the value of a cultural exchange, and at the end of the three-and-a-half weeks, each and every person on the trip was discovering what that meant for them personally, whether it be gaining valuable life skills or the courage to try new things, to gathering insight on issues of global significance. Joachim, who makes a point of delving into new experiences without preconceptions suggests that people “be open to new experiences, because the memories that you’ll remember the most are the ones that you may have been hesitant towards making.”



PHOTO BY ABBY HASTING-THARP
Junior Olivia Joachim embraces Khushi Trivedi, the host sister of classmate Abby Hasting-Tharp while on an outing.



PHOTO BY ABBY HASTING-THARP
Visitors and vendors alike throng around stalls selling fruit outside of the Hare Krishna temple in Mathura, which the group visited on their fourth day in India.



Adventures down under

By **Zaca Leatherwood**
Staff Writer

When I became excited about the possibility of going on a student exchange, the country that I wanted to visit most was Australia. It proved to be a subjectively easy transition due to the practically nonexistent language barrier that exists between it and the U.S. My trip did not disappoint, as I was immediately swept away by the gorgeous landscape of the Queensland area. The entire state is littered with beautiful inland national parks and sandy pristine beaches perfect for hiking and surfing. All the natural splendor does not take away from the sprawling metropolises of cities like Brisbane and Surfers Paradise, which both offer great city life, good food, and plenty of recreational activities.

My name is Zaca Leatherwood and I'm a junior at Northcoast Preparatory Academy. From January to April of 2020, I lived in Noosa, Australia, attending Sunshine Beach State High School on a student visa which I obtained with the help and patience of my family. Going to Australia was a dream of mine, and after being able to experience the indescribable beauty and healthy lifestyle that it has to offer, I can't wait to go back.

Australia is an enchanting place, where I fit-in well and was able to make so many friends. Noosa is home to some of the best beaches and surf spots, so consequently my favorite pastimes during my trip were surfing and lounging on the beaches with my friends while we watched the sunsets. The wave which I surfed most during my stay was called Nationals, and is in the Noosa National Park, a point break on the right side that's renowned for its accessibility to both beginners and experienced surfers. The waves at Nationals break for several hundred feet with the rare set of larger waves going even further. Noosa is a small town on the northern end of the Sunshine Coast and is influenced massively by the area's ocean-based culture, which Sunshine Beach State High School (SBSHS) contributes to greatly. The school offers its own surf class called "excellence in surfing," in order to benefit its many student-athletes, one of whom being World Surf League Championship first place contender Julian Wilson. Though the class is not thought of as being academic in a traditional

sense, it provided an outlet for the oftentimes rowdy kids who intend to pursue surfing as a career after graduating, not only bettering their skills, but giving them a reason to stay in school.

The students at SBSHS were very inviting, making it a real treat to be accepted as a member of their community. The connections I built on my exchange are ones that I hope will last a lifetime, the most substantial of which being with my host mother and brother. It's such a valuable thing to be invited into someone's home and to become a member of their family in such a meaningful way, and it was great to experience home life from another perspective.

Only now do I realize how much there is that I could tell you, and yet it seems like there's not enough space on this page to possibly share it all. What I hope readers take away from this article is firstly intrigue in participating in an exchange of their own, whether it be in Australia or anywhere else. Second, I hope to offer my two cents to those planning on going on exchange, in hopes of helping them to experience the most of what the region they travel to has to offer.

Though all these activities and sights from my trip could be compared to life in the US, there is a different type of atmosphere that surrounds the locality, demonstrated by how happy and fit most of the people you see there are. It is rare to see someone using their phone while outside, and

the familiar sight of someone checking their phone is replaced with seeing people of all ages going on jogs in the sun or running down to the waves, surfboard in hand. The overall active feel of the Sunshine Coast where I stayed made it incredibly easy to participate in and try new sports, whether they be an organized program from the school or just of my own discovery. Learning to skurf, which is similar to water skiing, was a super exciting experience that my host family introduced me to. Though all these aspects made my trip the experience of a lifetime, my most meaningful take-away was having met so many amazing people and establishing so many great connections, not only in Australia but with other exchange students from all over the world.

Early-on during my time abroad, I discovered that the most draining living expense arose from eating out at restaurants. Though food is an important part of the cultural experience, I advise cutting down to only eating out on occasion, or for personal curiosity. Not only is grocery shopping more cost-efficient, but it can also be a great way to connect with your host family, whether you're making local dishes or sharing your own family's recipes. During my stay, I enjoyed attending some wonderful Australian barbecues, or "barbies."

Luckily enough, on my exchange I lived near a great public transit system, with a wait time never exceeding 30 minutes, which always came at a very affordable

rate. Not only was it fun to try and find the best routes and to coordinate bus rides with my friends, but it was also great to learn more about how to navigate the area and become more confident in the process. Though Humboldt County does not have the most robust transit systems, there are public modes of transportation all over the world and can be an important way of travel to familiarize yourself with. I highly recommend utilizing the public transit system near you if you're ever abroad, and then treating personal transit systems, like Uber and Lyft as a last resort if you are unable to get a shuttle home.

Finally, the last budgeting tip I'd have to recommend would be to make use of activities organized by your school as much as you can. Most schools often have fun projects and activities that are created just for exchange students, and though they do come at a cost, they are often at much more of a discounted price than if you attempted to partake in the ventures on your own. The activities are also a great way to get to know your teachers, classmates, and the area as a whole.

I highly recommend that everyone put in the effort to attempt an exchange trip of your own, whether it be to Australia (highly recommended) or anywhere you desire. Everything about the process enriched my knowledge of travel, family, and friends. I wish you all safe travels and good luck on your own adventures.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZACA LEATHERWOOD
From surfing to schooling to petting kangaroos, junior Zaca Leatherwood made the most of his semester abroad in Australia.

“We’re saddened by the fact that we will never have quite the same experiences again.”

By **Omega Gaskill**
Staff Writer

If you were to ask me to describe my time at NPA in one word, "easy" would not be my first choice (or even my second, or third choices for that matter). But, like all things worth pursuing, education isn't meant to be effortless, something I'm only now realizing. The best way for me to articulate this sentiment is in writing, which I admit is not a passion of mine, although after spending four years on the Heron

Herald staff, I've begun to doubt this conviction, for the evidence is simply too incriminating.

As a freshman, when my best friend and now co-editor of two years Autumn Wright convinced me to join the journalism elective, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. For the record, we had convinced ourselves that joining the newspaper would be a good way to bolster our college applications, a concept as foreign to us then as it is now. Little did we know how much we'd come to look forward to our twice-weekly newspaper meetings through-

out the remainder of our three years of high school.

However defeatist it may seem, there's not a lot that stands out to me from my time as an underclassman, but there is a memory, that for one reason or another, has stuck with me since the beginning. To set the scene: it's nearing one a.m. on an indeterminate weeknight in the spring of 2017, and I'm way behind schedule on one of the most personally memorable articles I've written to this day. For posterity's sake I won't tell you the name of said article, but I'll note that after toiling over the most inconsequential details until the wee hours of the morning, the feelings of pride and accomplishment I was met with upon completion of said article were utterly consuming. It may be cliché, but I credit that night with being the driving force behind my dedication and genuine appreciation for the fine establishment that is the Heron Herald.

As juniors, Autumn and I took on the positions of Co-Editors-In-Chief of the paper as well as retaining our duties as staff writers. As the years advanced we were able to experience the leadership aspect of this class, which, for the previous two years had been entirely foreign to us. As an editor I've been able to expand my experience as a student journalist to include an entirely new type of learning: teaching. Offering the support and advice that I'm able to in such a limited scope, I've found that often, the best way to understand a concept is to help someone else in doing the same. This incredible opportunity, among many others, has been made possible under the careful guidance of the very same Andrew Freeman who convinced a pair of timid, expectant freshmen into becoming journalists in their own respect. The admiration

“After all this, we have the rest of our lives ahead of us”

A reflection on time well spent

By **Autumn Wright**
Staff Writer

When I was a sophomore, a graduating senior wrote a farewell letter to the school which was printed in the Heron Herald. I had read it multiple times, trying to figure out why it made me so sad and inspired at the same time. I cherished the idea of writing something to say goodbye, to explore emotion, and compress it into a short few words. Now, I'm saying farewell to a part of my life which has existed for longer than just the four years I've been at NPA - I'm saying goodbye to my childhood. And of course, I have to say goodbye to the Heron Herald, which has helped me become the person I am today.

One of the things I'll miss most about high school is sitting in the Fireside room during the electives period, vigorously editing articles. I can only hope that I'll derive as much passion and interest from something in college as I did in editing articles for the Heron Herald. I will miss the people, the environment, and the in-depth discussions that caused us to drift further and further from the topic at hand. Although I will miss it, I never thought of myself as saying goodbye. Maybe I'm just in denial, and the realization and acceptance of this moment will come later, but a part of me knows that these experiences will always be with me, and they will always hold a place in my heart when I remember my time at NPA.

The journey from being a timid and anxious freshman, to, an even more so senior, has been a wild ride. One of the largest contributors in helping me evolve through high school was joining the newspaper. Omega Gaskill and I joined together in the spring semester of our freshman year. In all honesty, I feel as though I can say now that I indeed only joined the newspaper as a freshman because I knew it would look good on college applications. And comedically it was one of the first things our adviser Andrew Freeman mentioned to us after we joined. The first year as a journalist for the Heron Herald was full of learning and new challenges, the second year I began to evolve my writing style, and so on. I thought about quitting a couple times, as school became too stressful and my plate began to overflow. Though, now I can say I'm glad I never did. Through it all, my eyes have been opened to the inner workings of the world around me. I've discussed things that I would've never thought I would, gotten to know many of my peers who I never would have, and above all was given responsibility that I would have never known I was capable of.

Somehow, Andrew Freeman makes us all believe that we contribute to something amazing, unique, something that changes opinions, and sways the views of the public. He has the ability to inspire you into believing that what you're doing is of the utmost importance. And believe me, I'm not saying it isn't, I'm merely stating that with any other advisor, who isn't as invested as Freeman is, the newspaper could have gone under years ago. He inspired me. I would like to thank him for helping me on my journey through high school by showing me that if you believe in something, there is nothing that can stop you. Although at times it has felt difficult, repetitive, or even monotonous, it has always resulted in something great, and for that I will always be proud of what I helped to accomplish. Seeing the finished product makes all of the late nights and balancing acts worth it.

When I was a freshman, I helped write a column in the Heron Herald entitled "Freshman Journalists Reflect," in which Omega and I wrote: "As the year is coming to a close, we're saddened by the fact that we will never have quite the same experiences again." As freshmen, we didn't know how right we were, and as I look back on it, I know that this is true for the whole of high school. Things like this only happen once, and almost always we regret not savoring the time that we spent there. Since my sophomore year, when the senior wrote that column saying farewell, I've known that one day I'll write one too, I just never could have imagined the time would come so soon.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSIE BELL
Outgoing Heron Herald editors Gaskill and Wright have been friends since childhood and are pictured here at age 6.

and respect that Andrew has for his students is uplifting to say the least, and for that I'm grateful.

I'd be lying if I said that the past four years have been easy. I'd even go as far as to say that they've been incredibly challenging, a view shared by plenty of the peers who have been on this journey with me. To

quote an article written by myself and fellow freshman journalists nearly three years ago to the day, "after all this, we have the rest of our lives ahead of us." I leave with you that piece of sage advice from what feels like a different era, and in closing, offer my gratitude for the school I'm leaving behind.



Gone too soon

The effects of the global pandemic for NPA students across the globe

By Alex Riggs, Juan-Nikolas Engel, and Zaca Leatherwood
Staff Writers

All over the world, countless students studying abroad have had their academic years cut short, causing massive displacements as they’ve been, and continue to be sent back to their home countries amidst the stress of COVID-19. In Humboldt County alone, the international student community has practically been halved, since students from McKinleyville High School, Arcata High School, and Northcoast Preparatory Academy, among others, have been sent home. The students in question have made these decisions, either from the intervention of their exchange agency, or them and their family’s own personal choices, though still, a few have elected to stay.

At the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, people were forced to choose one place to settle down in for the foreseeable months. Many had to quit their travels or international jobs, which impacted exchange students studying at NPA. As exchange students ourselves - Juan-Nikolas Engel in the USA, Alex Riggs in Colombia, and Zaca Leatherwood in Australia - we were all sent back to our home countries abruptly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. That said, many exchange students have had very different situations than we have. So, where have all of NPA’s exchange students ended up in light of this situation?

Juan-Nikolas Engel: International student at NPA, went home to Austria -

In such a difficult time it can be hard to decide whether exchange students should stay abroad or return home. My fellow Austrian international student at NPA, Annika Greiner, “decided to stay here in California because flying back to Austria would have put [herself] and others at major risk, especially [her] family at home.” Additionally, she would have had several layovers, which would have put her at an even greater risk for contracting the virus. The Austrian government also ordered that every person who is flying internationally to

Austria has to be quarantined for two weeks, so in Greiner’s words, “coming home would have left no chance for [her] to see any of my family nor friends anytime earlier.” Hearing her story reminded me about myself and the moment when I was confronted with the same question as an Austrian exchange student. My family and I made the decision for me to return home, which I did soon after reaching this conclusion. On my flight home I discovered that many international students were also traveling home because I met a South Korean international student who left St. Bernards High School in Eureka, and on my flight to Austria I got to know other Austrian exchange students, who, like me, were returning home. Upon arriving home, I experienced two weeks of quarantine and had to keep distance from my family to protect them, especially my Peruvian grandparents, who were visiting us in Vienna.

When embarking on the adventure that is international exchange, students and families will more often than not decide to travel with an exchange agency. Reasons vary, but agencies allow for a more tailored experience while abroad. When students travel with these circumstances, agencies become responsible for their students’ well being and become liable if certain situations were to put the student in danger.

Zaca Leatherwood: NPA student on international exchange in Australia, returned to USA -

My name is Zaca Leatherwood and I was studying at Sunshine Beach State School in Australia for the first term in the 2020 school year. The high school I attended had a large exchange student presence of more than 50 students, and amid the first weeks of students being sent home, many panicked that they themselves would be sent back by their agencies. Many agencies have decided to bring their students home while COVID-19 is still a threat, although many countries

have intervened and told exchange organizations that all of their residents must return home despite the organization’s decision to possibly keep students abroad. This caused much confusion, as students from the same agencies experienced cases in which some were recalled home while others were allowed to stay, adding to the overall distress of the students. If you are an exchange student it is important to understand that everyone’s exchange situation is unique, and that it is crucial to wait for information meant directly for you. Still, every situation abroad is unique, including the circumstance of Gaspard Vallee, an international student from France who attended NPA through the AFS program. He explained how the information provided by AFS was often misleading. “My association wasn’t clear, I received opposite information - some saying that I should stay and others saying that I had to return home, and it was all during a week,” explained Vallee.

My trip home was accompanied by many overlooked problems involving the airport’s low staff and high demand for travelers in a rush to get home. This made for massive lines and caused me to spend so much time in lines that I barely got to my gate in time, even despite the four hours of preparation made by me. The advice I would give for exchange students or anyone traveling during this time would be to plan ahead and get to the airport at least an hour before you had originally planned to arrive. If you have any transits, be sure that they are more than three hour layovers if you’re traveling through busy airports, and be sure to travel with a mask and hand sanitizer.

Alex Riggs: NPA student on international exchange in Colombia, returned to USA -

Some exchange students, like NPA juniors Gaspard Vallee and Aitana Marti-



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUAN-NIKOLAS ENGEL
Juan-Nikolas Engel at the Arcata Airport before he was flying back to Vienna, Austria due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

nez, have had to go home. Similarly to them, I was amongst the students who had to leave their exchange. Staying in Colombia, I experienced much tighter restrictions than were being imposed in the U.S. Firstly, I had gone into full quarantine a week prior to my American friends, without the freedom to go outside whatsoever, not even to do laundry or go on a run. At the time this article is being written (late April) Colombia has just hit a whopping 2,000 cases, 900 of which were from my city, Bogota. As limitations tightened in my host country and slowly followed in my home country, my family and I made the decision to cut my exchange short by having me fly home. The next morning, March 28th, at 5 a.m., I got on a plane home, with a layover in the world’s busiest airport, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, which I navigated entirely alone. Though scared and frustrated to be leaving a country in which I found so much growth, happiness, and wellbeing, I knew this was the right choice to make. This flight happened to be the last one out of the country before the complete closure of airports, borders, and travel of any kind. Once I was home, I self-quarantined for two weeks, similarly to how I had been doing in Colombia. And though I was sad not to say goodbye to my friends or to finish my experience abroad, I had a newfound personal understanding for the sacrifices people have had to make during these times.

Alternatively, some have made the choice to stay, like

Greiner and fellow NPA junior Luis Roquero. What these students have in common is that they all came to or left NPA through exchange programs, like AFS or ISE. Less common, however, is the way that junior Lucia Samper-Eiroa from Asturias, Spain came to NPA: independently, and without the aid of an exchange program.

Samper-Eiroa recounted many happy memories with her classmates, saying that one of the things she liked the most about NPA was how everyone treated the exchange students, which was “with warmth, as if [they] always knew each other, and how easy it was to make friends.” She was quick to notice the cultural differences between California and Spain, but found them to be “something great,” which she really loved.

Her love for her time at NPA and for her friends was one of the reasons she didn’t go home. Because she wasn’t associated with an exchange program, she and her family were forced to make the choice to stay or go by themselves. Samper-Eiroa left Humboldt County after having a conversation with her family at home in Spain, who “first thought that the best thing would be to return to Spain,” but Samper-Eiroa wanted to keep the possibility of returning to NPA after this situation, so she is currently staying with her older sister in Minnesota. Ideally, she “would really love to return to NPA next year,” but also understands that logistics like finding a host family or conferring with her school in Spain would also have to be sorted out. Wheth-

er Samper-Eiroa returns or not, she knows that she will always have memories of all of her “classmates, and the friends [she] has made, [she] will never forget them nor the moments she has lived in Humboldt with them.”

Our advice for those stuck making a hard decision, like Samper-Eiroa, is simple. It’s to read up on your local news and your news back at home, as well as globally. It’s important to understand travel as a complex feat during this time, something not to be taken lightly. Also important is communicating with your organization if you have one. Look at flight prices, because they are particularly expensive at this time, and try to avoid going through crowded places. If for whatever reason, you must leave, like the three of us did, take all the necessary precautions. Go into quarantine after arriving home for a minimum of two weeks, since it’s important not to expose others to this extremely contagious and sometimes deadly virus. Most importantly, be tuned in to what your family is saying, and think about your community. In the end, neither returning home nor staying in your exchange is the better decision. The best thing we can recommend is to find the best individual solution for your situation. From the Heron Herald team, and the three of us, we would like to thank all of the host families, teachers, classmates, and others who have made this experience feasible and amazing for so many exchange students, whether they are still here or not.

Past, present, and future

The class of 2020 reflects on their time in high school and its sudden conclusion

By Alex Riggs and Nikita Van Nordstrand
Staff Writers

“These are things that we will never get back, and we will never be consoled of,” said NPA senior Autumn Wright, reflecting on the shocking end to her senior year. The recent outbreak of COVID-19 has left senior classes in the U.S. to complete the remainder of their time in high school in isolation, as school campuses have been closed as a safety measure since mid-March and will remain closed through the end of the school year. Many seniors are devastated as their senior year and the traditions it entails have been ripped away from them.

Senior year is generally considered the most notable and rewarding time in one’s high school career, with its many celebrations and grand finale of graduation. COVID-19 has prevented many of these traditions from occurring, and students are left feeling deprived of their senior year experience. Although the current safety precautions are necessary to prevent the spread of coronavirus, one cannot help but be saddened by the outcome of the school year. “You attend NPA for four years seeing the seniors do all the fun stuff like the May Day celebration and masochistic cram study for exams expecting to finally experience it yourself; it’s like a payoff for working through NPA’s rigorous academic program,” explained senior

Aiden Vergen. This sudden shift to a much more self-managed learning style brings up concerns for students’ mental health. “I definitely prefer in-class school. It feels so much better to be able to interact in real life with teachers and classmates than through a screen,” said exchange student Valentine Lučić. While COVID-19 and the state-wide lockdown have put a wrench in the class of 2020’s final semester of high school, many of NPA’s seniors continue to plan for the future.

Most of NPA’s seniors “would hate the idea of virtual college,” for the separation it creates, the compromises in their education, and the difficulty self-managing or working at home through mental health issues as well as the practical fact of not being able to move into the dorms. The struggles of losing one’s senior year is a “unanimous experience” that seniors all across the state of California will relate to and carry forever.

“You attend NPA for four years seeing the seniors do all the fun stuff like the May Day celebration and masochistic cram study for exams expecting to finally experience it yourself.”

Aiden Vergen, senior

The class of 2020 has had many great times during their years at NPA, making the lack of closure on their senior year all the harder to experience. Areilla Adams said her favorite memory was the annual Halloween House, and notes that it “was so much fun to set up and organise, and I’m so glad I got to attend all four Halloween Houses.” Other students’ favorite memories of NPA are more general traditions between friends, like Lučić. “My favorite memories are the pumpkin patch, the cross country practices and all the lunch breaks I’ve spent with my friends talking and laughing about everything.” For Maya Hergenrader, the good memories are vast, and span all across her years at NPA. “I remember looking at the Eiffel

Tower as it was twinkling and sincerely laughing hysterically for the first and last time in a long time,” she said, reflecting on the 2017 France trip. “Being able to play the piano alone in the sanctuary after 3:40 in freshman year,” and “feeling happy when upperclassmen talked to me in freshman year,” were among Hergenrader’s other favorite memories.

Throughout all of the chaos and difficulties that the class of 2020 has and continues to experience, NPA’s seniors see the world of COVID-influenced education with astounding clarity.

Vergen advises students not to “let days pass into obscurity,” as “variety really is the spice of life.” Heron Herald senior editors Wright and Omega Gaskill encourage students to “re-evaluate what you want to put energy towards,” and “prioritize whatever has been at the back of your mind, use [your time] wisely and be patient.” Giving simple yet intelligent advice is Shoni Rheinschmidt, saying that “going outside once a day can make you feel much better,” and Hergenrader, advising students to be kind to oneself. Gale McComas welcomes students to “spend more time being happy about the current moment than wishing [it’d be] over sooner,” in an effort to be more appreciative of the things one took for granted before confinement.

While across California, the class of 2020 has not been granted the closure to their high school career they deserve, many of NPA’s seniors have found peace with this new reality and have been able to use it as a time to reflect on their vivid memories of high school. Though incredibly difficult and unfortunate, the students recognize the need to follow the correct measures to ensure safety of themselves and the community beyond them. Social distancing and self-isolating are invaluable ways to stop the spread of COVID-19, and for that reason we remind everyone to heed such advice. And though not granted a traditional graduation ceremony to close out the year the classes of 2020 have been recognized by many, such as former president Barack Obama. In this way, the seniors of this year have a special bond and much-deserved recognition.



Innovation begins with you

NPA student participates in business challenge

By Autumn Wright
Staff Writer

On May 21st beginning at 7 pm, a group of five high school students from Humboldt County pitched their business ideas to a panel of judges. This marked the conclusion of the 2020 INNOVATION! Business Challenge, which is a competition for high school-aged students to create ideas for new products, services and business startups. One of these finalists was NPA junior, Caleb Weiss.

Sponsored by The Decade of Difference, a ten year community initiative designed to “prepare our youth to be contributing and productive members in our society, community and economy,” the INNOVATION! Business Challenge sets to assist students in expanding their knowledge of business itself through building or expanding upon their own individual business ideas.

This business challenge was brought to the attention of Weiss by NPA Head of School, Michael Bazemore this past November. Weiss was eager to participate, as

he is very passionate about business and hopes to pursue it as a career. “Through this competition I knew that I could grow my business knowledge, and possibly win capital to further my business,” he explained

Weiss and more than 100 other applicants began this Challenge by uploading an “Elevator Pitch” - a 60-90 minute video explaining their business or their plans for a business. Out of all of these participants only 50 were chosen for the next level of competition. At this level the semi-finalists answered 13 “business concept questions,” which pertained to their individual businesses. After the five finalists were chosen, they moved on to the final stage, where they pitch their business or services to a panel of judges, similarly to the television show “Shark Tank.” The judges “gave me some helpful insights, and also asked me some really comprehensive questions,” explained Weiss, who advanced to the final round of the competition, finishing in fifth place and winning \$1,250, the grand prize being \$2,500. Students who

also advanced to the final round included (in order of winnings) Jude Ortega from Arcata High School, Samantha Gleave from Six Rivers Charter School, Elias Surber from Eureka High School, Chandler Mrotzek from Alder Grove Charter School, and Weiss from NPA.

Throughout the process of the competition the students were able to use the council of mentors to assist them. The students were able to bring in their own advisors, or in the case of Weiss, advisory could be recommended by the overall coordinator of the INNOVATION! Business Challenge, Karen Brooks. Brooks assigned Weiss a mentor who assisted him throughout the whole of the competition, named Emanuel Rose, who is a Specialty Business Advisor for his business Strategic eMarketing. Weiss expressed that Rose gave him real work advice and guidance for his own business, and helped him greatly throughout the competition. “The program coordinators, the coaches and the judges were all very helpful and inspiring

individuals who helped me gain business knowledge and insight, which not only helped me grow my business but helped me grow as a person,” expressed Weiss.

Weiss began the competition with a business plan, explaining that, “[he] had the idea before the competition, but the competition inspired [him] to start it.” His business is called “Bay-side Advertising Solutions,” and Weiss explained it as being “an internet marketing company” which, “looks to help local businesses with search engine optimization (SEO), social media, websites and other search engine compatibility factors.” Weiss’s business’s goal is to “help small local businesses in Humboldt County gain a larger online presence.”

“I’m going to continue running my business for the foreseeable future, or at least until I go to college,” explained Weiss. As of now he has one client: Hot Knots in Arcata, although with more time on his hands this summer, Weiss plans on expanding his client base. “I’m going to spend a lot of time trying to reach out to more local businesses, and get them online,” said Weiss, who explained that “starting a business is one of the most motivating and productive things you can do with your life.” Therefore

creating this business and continuing on with it has proved to be a great attainment for Weiss.

Overall this experience proved to be an inspiring and motivational one for Weiss, as he explained that “[the competition] allows you to gain knowledge in the world of business, into

the mind of consumers, to give you a broader understanding of culture.” He recommends this challenge to anyone who would like to gain experience in the world of business as “it will definitely help you in life, even if you don’t plan on going into business in the future.”



PHOTO COURTESY CALEB WEISS

NPA junior Caleb Weiss participated in the INNOVATION! Business Challenge, which ended this May. After finishing the challenge, Weiss found he had learned a lot about business, but even more about himself and his future aspirations.

NPA students participate in Earth Day demonstration

By Amaya Bechler
Staff Writer

By the mid-twentieth century in the United States, environmental harm ran rampant. Factories belched pollutants into the air and rivers. Pesticides such as DDT and its more toxic counterparts were quickly tearing apart ecosystems and driving species of wildlife toward extinction.

Then, around 1970, the environmental movement began - the public came together to protest the harm humans were causing to the environment. The holiday of Earth Day, on the 22nd of April, was founded.

Fifty years later, on the video-conferencing platform Zoom, NPA junior Eva Pearlingi explained all this and more in her presentation on the history of this unique holiday.

At 10:00 AM PST, students, parents, relatives, and friends from across the world gathered for the International Online Earth Day Demonstration, with over 60 people in attendance. Created by NPA’s very own Climate Act Club, the purpose of the hour-and-a-half long meeting was to both celebrate environmental progress and urge us to do more. Topics covered a variety of themes from endangered species and renewable energy, to the Green New Deal and climate activism in the age of COVID-19.

To start the meeting, Climate Act Club founder and Austrian exchange student Juan-Nikolas Engel welcomed everyone. “To

my friends in the United States: welcome,” he began. “To my friends in Peru: Bienvenidos, to those from Greece: καλως ΗΡΘΑΤΕ, to those from Russia: Добро пожаловать, to those of Austria: Herzlich Willkommen, and finally to those in Italy: Benvenuto.”

Indeed, the Earth Day demonstration was attended by representatives from six countries across the world. Even with their different cultures and backgrounds, Engel suggested that all the attendees are very similar in their shared passion. “All these people,” he explained, “are connected somehow. Even if their stories are different, climate activists want to look out for each other.”

Freshman Julia Davis highlighted the importance

of climate activism as a connection between people. “Coming together, such as in the Earth Day demonstration, makes you feel that you’re still connected. Hearing that someone has the same opinion is important, too. It makes you realize you’re not so alone,” Davis explained.

“Coming together, such as in the Earth Day demonstration, makes you feel that you’re still connected. Hearing that someone has the same opinion is important”

Julia Davis, freshman

After initial introductions, the members of the Climate Act Club worked together to present different subjects pertaining to Earth

Day. Pearlingi set the stage with a presentation on the history of Earth Day. Thinking back to her preparation for the event, Pearlingi reflected that “we worked pretty hard. I’d never done something like that, where it’s just peers putting something together. It went well.” Her presentation touched on the dire environmental circumstances of the past and the progress toward sustainability made in the present day.

Following the opening presentation, NPA junior Lea Eider presented the timely topic of climate activism in the age of COVID-19. She encouraged the audience to think critically about the environmental silver linings we are experiencing in the time of the pandemic. Though pollution is clearing and animals returning, Eider cautioned against forgetting about activism. Reminding everyone that we are bound to return to normal life (and with it, a larger carbon footprint), she concluded that COVID-19 demonstrates that “the planet wants to recover if we give it the chance.”

Following were presentations by freshman, sophomores, and juniors on many other topics, as well as concise summaries of each clause of the Green New Deal, a piece of legislation that aims to combat climate change. Then, the floor was opened for comments from the audience. The meeting ended on a positive note with a round of Kahoot, an online quiz platform that allows for friendly competition.

To prepare a complete demonstration of such breadth, the members of the Climate Act Club put in a significant amount of hard work and time. “We were working intensively, meeting almost every day,” recollected Engel. “Everyone worked hard, and that’s why it worked out.”

The quickly changing circumstances of COVID-19 added another layer of complexity to planning for the event. Initially, the Earth Day demonstration was going to be a school walkout. A couple of weeks prior, however, schools closed and the mandated shelter-in-place order

was instituted. The club had to adapt to presenting online, even though many had never done so before.

Engel attributed the success of the event entirely to dedicated teamwork. Additionally, he said that the “whole experience of working together while not being able to be physically together brought the club so much closer.”

In the current day, we are faced with a crisis more immediately imminent than climate change. We’ve seen it bring drastic changes to our lives, and for the most part, humanity has reacted as a whole in order to combat this threat.

“In these times it’s very important to remember each other. Our future is still changing every day and we have the power to decide what will happen.”

Juan-Nikolas Engel,
Climate Act Club
founder

Behind everything, climate change still remains a crisis, but one that is less of an immediate threat. It begs the question - what would happen if we responded to climate change with the same vigor with which we’ve confronted COVID?

“I think COVID-19 shows us that if we were to work together, and care for each other more, then problems could be solved so much faster,” said Engel. Additionally, he connects both the pandemic and climate crisis as symptoms of a root cause - the lack of compassion and empathy in today’s society.

“It shows how climate change is not only climate change, it’s a problem from society itself. We have changed our behaviors, we are not looking out for each other anymore,” Engel explained. “In these times it’s very important to remember each other. Our future is still changing every day and we have the power to decide what will happen.”



PHOTO BY JUAN-NIKOLAS ENGEL

Over 70 participants gathered on Zoom for the International Earth Day demonstration. The meeting, organized by NPA junior Juan-Nikolas Engel, was attended by people from six different countries. Many topics pertaining to the environment and climate change were discussed.

COVID-19 and our community, in photos



PHOTOS BY AMAYA BECHLER
Above: The parking lot on 7th and G St has become a temporary tent city for the homeless set up by city of Arcata.
Left: The NPA school garden has been left unchecked since students stopped attending the physical campus. The garden has since overflowed its beds and become a lush and chaotic jumble of plants.



PHOTOS (ABOVE) BY AMAYA BECHLER
Signs at the Arcata Marsh (left), Barnes Drug Store (right), and Larson Park (below) describing precautions taken against COVID-19. At the marsh and other parks, play structures and picnic tables have been taped off. Essential businesses have protocols in place to help limit the spread of the virus.



PHOTO BY ANDREW FREEMAN



PHOTO (ABOVE) BY OMEGA GASKILL
A sign made by Amy Gaskill, mother of graduating senior Omega Gaskill in front of the Bayside Community Hall.

PHOTO BY ABRAM RAU



A collection of songs arranged by Omega Gaskill in place of the senior class’s traditional “cotillion playlist”

“I kissed a girl” by Katy Perry - Autumn Wright
“Human Convention” by The Reign Of Kindo - Conrad McConnell
“Party in the USA” by Miley Cyrus - Shoni Rheinschmidt
“Dream Sweet in Sea Major” by Miracle Musical - Ronny Whitlatch
“Gravel Pit” by Wu-Tang Clan - Areilla Adams
“Don’t Stop Me Now” by Queen - Gale McComas
“Sweet Caroline” by Neil Diamond - Gale McComas
“YMCA” by Village People - Gale McComas
“We Didn’t Start the Fire” by Billy Joel - Leo Peerson
“Dancing Queen” by ABBA - Sasha Woodruff
“Friend like me” from Aladdin - Sasha Woodruff
“What makes you beautiful” by One Direction - Sasha Woodruff
“Circles” by Mac Miller - Valentine Lucic
“Thinning Out” by Elvis Depressedly - Maya Hergenrader
“Afterlife” by Avenged Sevenfold - Maya Hergenrader
“La Vie en Rose” by Edith Piaf - Maya Hergenrader
“Alouette” by Alain le Lait - Maya Hergenrader
“Green Light” by Lorde - Jane McCaffrey
“Getaway Car” by Taylor Swift - Jane McCaffrey
“Girls” by The 1975 - Omega Gaskill
“Birds Gave Up” by Orion Sun - Sophia Stenger

“Out Gettin Ribs” by King Krule - Sophia Stenger
“Blazin ft. Jae Macgizmo” by Koffee - Sophia Stenger
“No Aloha” by The Breeders - Sophia Stenger
“Leray” by Trippie Redd - Sophia Stenger
“Pond Weed” by Brad Stank - Sophia Stenger
“Lightning” by Orion Sun - Autumn Wright
“Oui Ou Non” by Angele - Autumn Wright
“We Will Always Love You (feat. Blood Orange)” by The Avalanches - Autumn Wright
“Prune, You Talk Funny” by Gus Depperton - Autumn Wright
“Charcoal Baby” by Blood Orange - Autumn Wright
“Steen” by Khali - Melissa Horne
“Animal” by Kesha - Melissa Horne
“What the Hell” by Avril Lavigne - Melissa Horne
“Under the Weather” by Mac Miller - Melissa Horne
“Young Forever” by the Ready Set - Melissa Horne
“Push it to the Limit” by Corbin Bleu - Melissa Horne
“Plans” by Jerry Paper - Misha Scott
“Pelas Sombras” by Arthur Verocai - Aiden Vergen
“Waltz for Niau” by Tamás Kátaí - Amaya Bechler
“Ixion Duun” by Thy Catafalque - Amaya Bechler

Where’s the class of 2020 going after graduation?

Disclaimer: Due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, some students’ plans are subject to further change.

California

Melissa Horne - UC Davis for a Biochemistry and Molecular Biology major
Omega Gaskill - Community College in the Bay Area or Southern California, then transfer
Finn Tetrault - College of the Redwoods for Political Science
Ocean Milan - College of the Redwoods, then hopeful transfer to UCLA
Sasha Woodruff - Humboldt State University for Kinesiology
Maya Hergenrader - Humboldt State University for Cultural Linguists or Education
Sophia Stenger - Gap year, then Humboldt State
Shoni Rheinschmidt - Stanislaus State University on the pre-nursing track
Areilla Adams - UC Davis for Animal Science and Management
Siena Costanzo - UC Davis for Italian Studies
Erin Le - UC Davis for Civil Engineering
Aiden Vergen - UC San Diego for Japanese Studies and Computer Science
Autumn Wright - UC Santa Cruz for Marine Biology

Oregon

Rayna Pearlingi - Lewis and Clark College
Gale McComas - Willamette University on their 3+2 MBA program
Jane McCaffrey - Southern Oregon University for Theater

Washington

Louis Margolin - Whitman College

New York

Amaya Bechler - Cornell University for Biological Sciences

New Mexico

Conrad McConnell - St. John’s College

Belgium

Valentine Lučić - Vrije Universiteit Brussel (University of Brussels) for Human/Social Sciences

Undecided

Ronny Whitlatch - Either the University of Colorado at Boulder, or a year at the College of the Redwoods
Mandy Smalley - Either HSU, UC Davis, or Red Feather Community College
Leo Peerson - taking a semester to focus on art, then either the College of the Redwoods, Humboldt State, or Rocky Mountain College
Michael Scott - Gap year, apply for Music school in the fall
Julian Ramirez- Undecided

Good luck in the future, Class of 2020!

Autumn Wright
Editor, Staff writer

Omega Gaskill
Editor, Staff writer

Amaya Bechler
Layout editor, Staff writer

Andrew Freeman
Advisor, Fearless leader

Abram Rau
Staff writer

Alex Riggs
Staff writer

Devon Baker-Berry
Staff writer

Juan-Nikolas Engel
Staff writer

Zaca Leatherwood
Staff writer

Jaxon Peaker
Staff writer

Abby Hasting-Tharp
Staff writer

Ari Alter
Staff writer

Zoe Osborn
Staff writer

Nikita Van Nordstrand
Staff writer